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(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: **TREVOR BURKE TECHNOLOGY LIMITED** [GB/GB]; The Pavilion, Torpenhow, Montgomery Hill, Frankby, Wirral L48 1NF (GB).

(72) Inventor; and
(75) Inventor/Applicant *(for US only)*: **BURKE, Trevor** [GB/GB]; The Pavilion, Torpenhow, Montgomery Hill, Frankby, Wirral L48 1NF (GB).

(74) Agent: **ALLMAN, Peter, John**; Marks & Clerk, Sussex House, 83-85 Mosley Street, Manchester M2 3LG (GB).

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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROGRAMME GENERATION AND CLASSIFICATION

(57) Abstract: A method for generating a programme for presentation to a user such that the presented programme is made up from a sequence of programme elements each of which is a programme clip taken from at least one distributed programme and each of which represents an event. Each programme element is classified on the basis of the event represented by the programme element. Each programme element is stored with at least one associated programme element classification code, and each classification code identifies a class to which the event represented by the associated programme element has been allocated. A programme is assembled for presentation to the user by selecting at least one programme classification code, and generating an assembled programme in the form of a sequence of programme elements associated with the at least one programme classification code. Programme elements are classified using a set of event classes including a plurality of subsets of the event classes. Classification of each programme element comprises a classification operator making at least one selection from at least one of the subsets, said selection determining at least one of the subsets from which future selections can be made. The at least one selection generates the classification code associated with the programme element.

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METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROGRAMME GENERATION AND CLASSIFICATION

The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for programme generation and classification. In particular, the present invention relates to the generation of programmes by assembling a series of programme elements each of which is represented by at least one data packet. Individual programme elements may define for example single images or series of images or audio passages. The programme elements may be distributed in pre-recorded form, or broadcast to a recipient provided with equipment for recording programme elements for subsequent replay.

Before the advent of recording equipment and in particular video recorders, programmes were produced and distributed via the atmosphere or cable and simply reproduced by a recipient's receiver. There was no possibility whatsoever for a recipient to control the received programme over and above turning the receiver on or off.

Video recorders made it possible for a recorded programme to be viewed selectively in that a recording tape could be advanced to a part of the programme of interest which could then be viewed, it not being necessary to view every element of the programme recorded on the tape. Video disc players were then introduced in which individual programme elements were separately indexed such that each programme element could be rapidly accessed as compared with a video tape storage system. There was no fundamental difference however between tape and disc systems in terms of the degree to which a user could interact with the recorded programme in that the user had to know where on the recording medium programme elements of interest were located and thus required knowledge of which programme element was recorded where on the recording medium. Programme elements were recorded on the basis that each programme element was allocated to a particular position on the recording

medium, access to any one programme element in essence requiring an index in which programme element identity is related to storage medium position.

Interactive video programmes are now available in which programme elements are stored in the memory of a computer and programmes are produced which in part are dependent upon actions taken by an operator of the computer. (The term "memory" is used herein to include solid state, disc, CD and any other form of data storage capable of storing programme elements). For example a computer game may display images to a user which are read out from the computer memory, the user may then take actions appropriate to the displayed image, and depending upon the actions taken by the user the programme content will change. For example the user may "kill" an adversary depicted on the computer monitor's screen, the actions taken by the user to kill the adversary determining the nature of the sequence of images and associated audio output generated by the computer. Thus there is a limited degree of interaction between the user and the programme in that the order of presentation of stored programme elements is dependent upon actions taken by the user, but essentially the user does no more than determine which route is taken through a complex set of alternative routes defined by the computer so as to produce a series of images corresponding to that route. The user has no way of knowing what the next programme element to be displayed will be, unless the user has played the game a sufficient number of times to learn the response of the computer to a particular control input.

Viewers cannot "edit" programmes with current systems. There are often circumstances in which a viewer of a programme knows the kind of elements of a programme which will be of interest and which will not, and yet a viewer cannot make selections of programme elements of interest even from a recorded programme without a detailed index that describes the nature of each programme element which is recorded at a particular position in a recording medium.

There are circumstances in which it would be highly desirable for a user to be able to edit programme content. In many circumstances, particularly in the case of broadcast sports programmes, potential viewers of those programmes are really interested in only relatively small sections of a broadcast sporting event. For example, with live broadcasts, sections of high interest value, for example the scoring of a goal, are often repeated at the expense of not broadcasting passages of play which are relatively uninteresting, for example the period leading up to the game being re-started after the scoring of a goal. The perceived value of a broadcast programme is considerably enhanced by such "action replays" but it is frustrating for a viewer not to be able to decide which sections of a game to replay and to be forced simply to accept what is broadcast by the programme producer.

It is often the case that elements of real interest in a sporting event could be delivered over a relatively slow communications channel the bandwidth of which is insufficient to carry a full live broadcast of the event. Thus, bandwidth restraints are a real limitation of broadcast television systems. Furthermore, the resolution available with standard personal computer display screens is far greater than that available with a standard television receiver, and this can be a severe limitation in some circumstances where images of great detail are required to enhance viewer appreciation. The available resolution cannot be used however with broadcast programmes given the limited resolution of the broadcast images. At present, the only way that enhanced quality images can be made available is by the distribution of programme material on disc, and clearly such an approach would not generally be appropriate for ephemeral events such as sports fixtures.

The traditional approach to enable a user to access programmes of interest has been the publication of schedules which are essentially lists of the programmes that are made available over a preset period on preset channels. Initially such schedules were published in for example newspapers and magazines. Many proposals have been made however to broadcast schedule information as well as the programmes

described in the schedule. Schedule information can be for example broadcast on dedicated channels or teletext. Essentially these known systems do no more that simulate the traditional printed schedules made available in newspapers. As the number of channels made available has increased, the volume of information contained in the conventional schedules has grown and as a result the schedules have become unwieldy and difficult to use. In particular, even if users can identify the start times for distributed programmes, users cannot selectively record particular programmes except by pre-selecting channels to be recorded and the times at which those channels are to be recorded.

European patent specification EP 0705036 (Sony) describes an enhanced broadcast scheduling system in which individual programmes are identified by title, channel and time of broadcast as in conventional "hard copy" schedules and also by further information classifying programmes in terms of programme type or category, for example news, drama, music, the identity of contributing artists and the like. Individual distributed programmes in some cases are sub-classified into programme elements. For example a music programme may be sub-classified into programme elements each of which represents the contribution of a different artist, or each of which represents a contribution of a particular type, for example a particular style of music. There is thus a two-tier hierarchy in the schedule with individual programmes being at an upper level in the hierarchy and elements within a programme being at a lower level in the hierarchy. A user is able to search through a schedule for a particular programme or programme element of interest by selecting categories of interest, the system then locating programmes or programme elements of interest within the schedule. Programmes or programme elements so identified can then be viewed or recorded for later viewing. Recording is on a time basis, although some provision is made for detecting when a programme or programme element identified as being of interest within the schedule has been broadcast at a later time than that predicted by the schedule.

Thus the Sony specification provides what is essentially an on-line schedule with a greater level of detail than in a conventional schedule and with the ability to search through the schedule information for programmes or programme elements considered to be of interest. The user can therefore efficiently identify scheduled programmes or programme elements of interest but the Sony system does not enable a user to manage the receipt, recording and replay of programme material in a way tailored to a particular users requirements. By way of analogy, Sony can be considered as having provided a sophisticated cataloguing system for material edited by suppliers of that material. Sony does not enable management of the supplied material to suit the requirements of particular users.

It is an object of the present invention to provide improved methods and apparatus for assembling programmes for presentation to user in a manner which enables sophisticated management of the large volumes of programme material being made available in ever increasing volumes.

To assist in an understanding of the invention, this document will use the terms "distributed programme", "assembled programme", "programme element" and "event" in the sense defined by the following paragraphs.

A "distributed programme" is a video or audio clip which is made available to a user, for example by broadcasting or on a data carrier such as a video tape or DVD and which is described in a schedule (in the case of broadcast material) or on packaging (in the case of a data carrier) to enable a user to access the clip. In the case for example of the scheduling system described in Sony patent specification EP 0705036, a programme element as that term is used in the Sony document would itself be a "distributed programme" in the sense of the term as it is used in this document as each such "programme element" as the term is used in the Sony document is separately identified in the schedule which is distributed to users.

An "assembled programme" is a set of video or audio clips that is assembled from distributed programme material, the assembled clips being presented to a user. Thus an assembled programme is the final output of an editing process which selectively combines a set of clips in accordance with the wishes of the user controlling the editing process. The assembled programme could be assembled from pre-recorded clips or made up from both locally stored clips and "live" broadcast clips which are not locally stored.

A "programme element" as that term is used in this document is a video or audio clip which forms all or part of a distributed programme and which can form part of a set of clips assembled to form an "assembled programme". A programme element can be classified on the basis of any criteria of interest to the user, such as type (for example sport, highlights from a particular sporting contest, drama, or a particular type of scene in a drama) or value (for example a level of excitement in a sporting contest or a level of violence in a drama). One programme element can be part of a higher level programme element and may itself be made up of a series of lower level programme elements. Each programme element may itself be made up from for example a series of data packets which are broadcast and assembled in accordance with conventional transmission protocols.

An "event" is anything which can be represented by a single video or audio clip in the form of a "programme element". An event can be part of a higher level event and may itself be made up from a series of lower level events. For example, a tennis match could be an event at one level, with individual games in that match being events at a lower level, and actions contributing to individual games being events at a still lower level. Thus each video or audio clip which represents an event is a "programme element".

According to the present invention, there is provided a method for generating a programme for presentation to a user such that the presented programme is made up

from a sequence of programme elements each of which is a programme clip taken from at least one distributed programme and each of which represents an event, each programme element being classified on the basis of the event represented by the programme element, each programme element being stored with at least one associated programme element classification code, each classification code identifying a class to which the event represented by the associated programme element has been allocated, and a programme being assembled for presentation to the user by selecting at least one programme classification code and generating an assembled programme in the form of a sequence of programme elements associated with the at least one programme classification code, wherein programme elements are classified using a set of event classes including a plurality of subsets of the event classes, classification of each programme element comprises a classification operator making at least one selection from at least one of the subsets, said selection determining at least one of the subsets from which future selections can be made, and the at least one selection generating the classification code associated with the programme element.

A plurality of programme elements representing temporally adjacent events may be classified by the classification operator, and classifications of temporally earlier events may determine the at least one subset of event classes from which the classification operator may make selections. The set of event classes may contain classes having hierarchical relationships, and the subsets from which future selections can be made may be determined by the hierarchical relationships. The at least one subset from which selections can be made may be symbolically displayed to the classification operator.

The present invention also provides an apparatus for carrying out the method set out above. A computer program for carrying out the method set out above is also provided.

In summary, the present invention gives to a user an ability to edit the content of a presented programme in a manner which is fundamentally different to the mere selection of programmes on the basis of a schedule describing the programmes which are available.

Embodiments of the present invention, will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic representation of the overall structure of a first system in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 is a schematic representation of equipment provided at each receiver of the system of figure 1;

Figures 3 and 4 schematically represent the generation of programme elements and associated classification codes and the storage of received programme elements and associated codes at a receiver;

Figure 5 is a schematic representation of the addition of classification codes to television signals produced at a programme source;

Figure 6 is a schematic representation of the storage and use of programme elements and associated classification codes at a receiver;

Figure 7 is a view of a display screen showing Figure 6 to a larger scale;

Figure 8 is a schematic representation of symbols displayed on the screen of Figure 7 to represent the progress of a sporting event;

Figure 9 is a schematic representation of a display screen in a form suitable for the generation of an assembled programme including simultaneously reproduced programme elements;

Figure 10 is a schematic illustration of a top-level view of a second system in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 11 is a tree diagram showing an upper part of a hierarchy which is used to classify broadcast television in the system of figure 10;

Figures 12A and 12B are tree diagrams showing part of the hierarchy of Figure 11 in further detail;

Figure 13A is a screenshot of a graphical user interface (GUI) provided in the classifier illustrated in Figure 10, and Figure 13B is an illustration of a file selector dialog used in the GUI of Figure 13A;

Figures 14A to 14F are screen shots of the interface of Figure 13 as a classification sequence is carried out;

Figure 15 is a tree diagram showing the hierarchical relationships between Java classes which are instantiated by the classifier illustrated in figures 14A to 14F;

Figures 16A to 16F show schematic representations of objects created and updated by the classifier during the classification sequence shown in Figures 14A to 14F;

Figures 17A to 17F show schematic representations of data packets transmitted from a broadcaster to a receiver to represent the classification sequence shown in Figures 14A to 14F;

Figure 18 shows the temporal relationship between events represented in Figure 14F;

Figure 19 is a schematic illustration of events contained within a scheduled distributed programme relating to news;

Figure 20 is a tree diagram showing the hierarchical relationships between the events shown in Figure 19;

Figure 21 is a tree diagram showing an event hierarchy suitable for use in classifying a soccer match;

Figure 22 shows the interface of figure 14F further displaying a dialog which may be used to specify, inspect and change programme element properties;

Figure 23 is a schematic illustration of the architecture of the system of Figure 10;

Figure 24 is a schematic illustration of a broadcast server used to transmit data to home receivers in the system of Figure 10;

Figure 25 is an illustration of a GUI for a profile specification application used in the system of Figure 10;

Figures 26 is an illustration of a GUI used in the system of Figure 10, which allows a user to select material to be viewed in terms of recorded scheduled distributed programmes;

Figures 27 is an illustration of a GUI used in the system of Figure 10 which allows a user to select material to be viewed in terms of recorded events;

Figure 28 is an illustration of a GUI used in the system of Figure 10 for a player application used in the present invention;

Figure 29 is an illustration of a series of icons which may appear in an area of the GUI of Figure 28; and

Figures 30A to 30D illustrate a dynamic palette for use in the system of Figure 10.

Referring to Figure 1, terminals 1 which may be conventional PC's (Personal Computers) are connected via conventional modems 2 and telephone lines 3 to a conventional telephone exchange 4. The telephone exchange receives either via existing telephone links or via a direct connection 5 programme element data and programme generation control data from a distributed programme source 6. Conventional data compression techniques may be used such that the transmitted programme element data includes for example only the data necessary to represent the changes between successive frames of a programme element. Each programme element may include a predetermined number of successive frames, although a programme element could be made up of only a single frame. For example, a single frame could be transmitted as part of a data packet including voice data describing that single frame.

Referring to Figure 2, each terminal comprises an input interface 7, a buffer 8 and a conventional display device 9. Programme elements are stored in the buffer 8 and read out under the control of a controller 10 which receives the programme generation control data via input interface 7 and modem 2 from the telephone line 3.

Each terminal 1 receives a stream of data which is delivered to the input interface 7 from the modem 2, the stream of data incorporating a series of programme elements, from each of which one or a series of video images and associated audio output can be generated, and control signals which are subsequently used to control the display of

programme elements stored in the buffer. For example, the buffer may be capable of storing programme elements representing two minutes of a continuous real-time programme. If that data was to be read out to the display at a rate corresponding to the normal frame rate of a conventional television system, all of the image data stored in the buffer would be read out in two minutes. Assuming a data rate on the telephone line 3 which is only one sixth of that required for continuous real-time reproduction, only two minutes in every twelve minutes of a real-time event could be reproduced as data would be read out of the buffer faster than it could be updated in the buffer. In accordance with an aspect of the present invention, programme element data is stored in the buffer for subsequent reproduction in dependence upon control signals from the controller 10, the selection of programme element data to be stored and reproduced being such as to enhance the perceived quality of the programme appearing on the display 9.

For example, if the programme element data received represents a sporting event, image data representing only one sixth of the image data generated at the sporting event would be transmitted to the buffer. The received image data would however be replayed in a manner which effectively conceals the fact that image data representing periods of the sporting event which are of little visual interest has been discarded. Thus for example a ten second sequence leading up to the scoring of a goal would be transmitted once but might be reproduced several times. It will be appreciated that even with conventional real-time live television broadcasts, highlights are often repeated a number of times, thereby discarding some of the images generated at the event. During a relatively dull period of a match, programme element data related to a relatively more interesting part of the event would be transmitted to the terminal. During a relatively dull period of an event, programme element data might not be transmitted to the terminal or, in the absence of any relatively more interesting passages of play, data could be transmitted which represents programme elements which would be allocated a relatively low priority. A subsequently occurring passage of relatively greater interest could be subsequently transmitted and displayed as soon

as it is resident in the buffer. Accordingly by allocating different priorities to different sequences of images a controller of the system can control the images displayed to the end user so as to maximise the perceived value of the programme that the images constitute.

Figures 3 and 4 seek to illustrate one possible embodiment of the invention as described with reference to Figures 1 and 2. Figure 3 represents fifteen successive events each of which is represented by a programme element identified by numbers 1 to 15. The system operator allocates "value" to each of the programme elements in the form of a priority code, those codes being represented by letters A to J, with the letters being allocated in order such that the programme elements of maximum interest are allocated to a class identified by letter A and programme elements of minimum interest are allocated to a class identified by letter J. For the purposes of this example, it will be assumed that each programme element lasts exactly one minute but requires two minutes to be transmitted to the terminal. The terminal buffer is capable of storing five one minute programme elements at a time. Figure 4 illustrates which programme elements are stored at the terminal during each of the fifteen periods represented by the programme elements illustrated in Figure 3. The left hand column in Figure 4 represents the number of each of the fifteen programme elements, the second to sixth columns in Figure 4 represent the contents of five memory locations in the terminal, showing which programme element is stored at the end of each period, and the letters in the seventh to eleventh columns represent the value allocated to the stored programme elements.

It will be seen that in the first period programme element 1 is generated, transmitted to the terminal and stored. Likewise in the second, third, fourth and fifth periods, the second to fifth programme elements are generated, transmitted and stored. At this time in the process ten minutes will have elapsed. During that ten minutes period the user will have been presented with a series of images made up from the information as stored. For example during the fifth period, programme elements 1 and 2 may be

presented sequentially during the time that the fifth element is being delivered. The sixth programme element has a higher priority than the first programme element and therefore it is transmitted and stored in the first memory location. The seventh element has a lower priority than any of the stored programme elements and therefore is not transmitted. The eighth element has a higher priority than the oldest of the H value programme element (programme element 4) and therefore is transmitted and replaces that element in the store. The ninth element then replaces the fifth programme element, the tenth element replaces the sixth element, the eleventh element replaces the third element, the twelfth element is not transmitted as it has a lower value than any of the stored values, the thirteenth element is not transmitted as it has a lower value than any of the stored values, the fourteenth element is transmitted as it has a higher value than programme element 2, but the fifteenth element is not transmitted as it has a lower value than any of the stored values.

Clearly if the simple routine according to Figure 4 was followed without fail, in the end all of the memory locations would be filled with high value programme elements which might, depending on the application, become "stale", in which case one could have a routine for example to reduce the priority of stored programme elements over time so that the stored programme elements are "refreshed". For example the priority level of any stored programme element could be reduced by one step every two cycles of the routine.

Figures 3 and 4 explain how programme elements are delivered to a terminal but do not explain the manner in which those programme elements are used to generate an assembled programme. Many alternative control schemes could be envisaged. For example, the terminal could automatically generate an assembled programme from the stored elements, cycling through the stored elements in a predetermined manner. For example all A priority programme elements could be repeated say three times, all B priority programme elements could be repeated once, and so on. Programme elements could be of varied duration so as to enable the allocated priorities to

represent programme elements which begin and end with natural break intervals, for example to coincide with interruptions in play. As an alternative to automatic programme generation control however, it would be possible for the user of the terminal to have total control of the images presented, for example by presenting the user with an image representing the priority value allocated to the locally stored programme elements for direct selection of programme elements of interest by the terminal user.

Figure 5 is a graphical representation of a process which can be used to generate a data stream the content of which enables the user of a terminal receiving that data stream to "edit" a set of received programme elements to produce a programme uniquely adapted to the user's wishes. Figure 6 represents the handling of the data stream at the user terminal, Figure 7 the appearance of a screen represented to a smaller scale in Figure 6, and Figure 9 a series of symbols or 'icons' displayed on the screen of Figure 7 with a series of sequence numbers to assist in understanding the description of the significance of those icons set out below.

Referring to Figure 5, data represented by arrow 11 is captured by a TV camera 12 to produce a stream of digital data represented by arrow 13, that digital data defining the video and audio content of the events taking place in front of the camera 12. As the data is generated, a system operator allocates classification data to the video and audio content of a series of programme elements represented by the data stream 13, the classifications being a subjective indication of the content of the associated programme elements. The value classification data is represented in Figure 5 by the arrow 14. Further control data may be added as represented by arrow 15 to further classify the subjective value data 14, for example the identity of a team responsible for a particular event. The combined data 14 and 15 is output as represented by arrow 16 in the form of control data.

The two data streams represented by arrows 13 and 16 are delivered to a transmitter, transmitted to a terminal and stored in a terminal buffer as represented in Figure 6. The combined data stream is represented by lines 17 and the buffer by rectangle 18. In the buffer, each class of data is stored according to its class type in its own area of the buffer, the class type corresponding to the subjective value allocated to the associated programme elements. Data is read out from that buffer as represented by lines 19 in accordance with commands delivered to the buffer 18 by the user on the basis of information displayed on the terminal display screen 20.

Referring to Figure 7, this is a larger reproduction of the screen 20 of Figure 6. The blank area which occupies most of Figure 7 corresponds to an area of the display screen on which programme elements will be displayed, and the symbols appearing at the bottom of the screen correspond to displayed icons which represent the content of a series of programme elements stored in the buffer 18.

Referring to Figure 8, the icons appearing at the foot of the screen shown in Figure 7 are reproduced next to numbers 1 to 16. Assuming that programme element data is being delivered at a rate such that a real-time reproduction of a live event can be produced, the display screen will show the live action. Programme elements of particular interest are however stored for later reproduction, each stored programme element being classified and represented by an associated icon. The first icon corresponds to "kick off", that is the first passage of the game. The second icon indicates a high quality passing sequence, the third a high quality long pass, the fourth a shot on goal, the fifth a yellow card warning to player number 8, the sixth a further high quality passing sequence, the seventh a goal, the eighth a further shot on goal, the ninth a further yellow card warning to player number 4, the tenth a penalty, the eleventh another goal, the twelfth half time (45 minutes), the thirteenth another high quality passing sequence, the fourteenth a corner, the fifteenth a penalty, and the sixteenth another goal. Home team icons may be highlighted for example in red and away team icons in black.

The icons appear from the bottom left of the screen and continue moving to the right as the game progresses. This means that the oldest recorded events are on the right. Further programme elements will cause the oldest programme elements to be displaced.

The programme elements represented in Figure 8 are generated by storing only data representing events which are of interest to the terminal user as defined by a minimum priority set by that user. For example none of the recorded programme elements corresponds to boring periods of play. The user can simply review the icons and switch between different icons using a keyboard or remote control device in a conventional manner, for example by moving a cursor on the simulated control panel at the bottom right hand corner of Figure 7. It is easy for the user to see in the example represented in Figure 8 that there were ten highlights exceeding the user's threshold setting before half time. The colour of the icons will indicate which team if any dominated play. It can be seen that there was a good passing movement, a good long forward pass before an identified player received a yellow card. The first half included two goals for teams identified by the colour of the associated icon. The current score can be determined by looking at the colour of the three icons representing the scoring of a goal. The terminal user has the choice of either seeing the whole broadcast programme, seeing all the highlights, or jumping through the sequence of highlights in any desired order.

Thus a terminal user can either watch a distributed programme in a conventional manner, or skip through parts of a distributed programme looking at only those sections of real interest, or periodically review the displayed icons to see if anything of sufficient interest has happened to merit further attention. The user can thus use the system to identify programme elements of interest without it being necessary for the user to do more than glance occasionally at the screen. The user can make a decision to record all or only highlights of a broadcast distributed programme, interact

with the programme by actively selecting programme elements to be displayed, or allow the system to make a selection of programme elements to be stored in accordance with a predetermined value selection keyed into the terminal at an earlier time by the user, or allow the generation of a continuous programme by allowing the classification data transmitted with the programme elements to control programme generation in accordance with a default set of value selections determined by the system provider.

The system can be used in circumstances where the data delivery communications channel can carry data at a rate sufficient to accommodate all of the real-time programme transmission, or at a rate higher than a conventional transmission (to allow the generation of for example high definition images), or at a rate lower than a normal transmission (in which case a "full" programme can be achieved by repeating previously stored programme elements as necessary).

In terms of the significance to the user of the capabilities of the system, the terminal gives great flexibility so that the terminal operator can choose to experience a broadcast distributed programme in any of a large number of ways, for example by:

1. Setting a threshold value to select only highlights of a transmission.
2. Setting a threshold value which could be transmitted to the programme source and used at that programme source to select "above threshold" passages of play from for example more than one sporting event.
3. Displaying by means of icons a "storyboard" of a sequence of events to allow rapid access to events of particular significance.
4. Choosing to permanently record any set or subset of highlights.
5. Recalling and replaying any stored item at will substantially instantaneously.
6. Storing programme elements and associated icons for review at the icon level or as a full programme at a later time.
7. Storing automatically only the highlights of an event for later review, thereby reducing storage requirements.

8. Arranging for the system to take out programme elements of a broadcast distributed programme of little interest to the viewer.

9. Watching a distributed programme live and automatically storing highlights for later replay.

10. Using the system to "watch" a distributed programme so as to alert the user when something interesting is happening.

In reduced bandwidth systems in which the available bandwidth does not allow the delivery to the user's terminal of all of the real-time broadcast signal, it is necessary to "expand" the time occupied on the screen by transmitted programme elements so as to "fill in" periods of time during which programme elements are being transmitted. This can be achieved by simply repeating programme elements, assuming that each viewed programme element corresponds to the simple reproduction of a real-time series of events, or by using still images and associated audio signals. There are many occasions, particularly during lapses in action, where a still picture and well recorded sound is better than poor video in terms of enhancing the entertainment value. Such an application of the present invention is described with reference to Figure 9.

Figure 9 represents a screen which has been split into four sections A to D. These different sections can be used for any specific purpose, can vary in size, and their usage may be changed according to the dynamics of the broadcast material. For the purposes of illustration section A of Figure 9 may be used to display a moving video picture, section B diagrams or graphs, and section C a high quality still picture. An associated audio programme is also produced. For example, the system illustrated schematically in Figure 9 can be used in association with the broadcast of a programme describing a golf tournament. A golfer may be shown standing on the fairway of a particular hole at a famous golf course in section A of the screen. The golfer can be describing the beauty of the course and how he would play that hole. Section C of the screen can be used to present a very high quality image of the golfer's

current location. Section B may contain a plan of the hole showing where the golfer's first drive finished, with distance markers, ranges and the like.

The golfer can work to a script which directs the user's attention to selected parts of the screen. For example the golfer may draw the attention of the terminal user to the way the ground falls away to the left, the dangers of over-pitching straight into a bunker guarding the green, and the beauty of the course and various geographical features. All the time that the golfer is delivering this message, there is no motion at all on the screen. If the golfer talks for 20 seconds about the still picture image on the screen, this gives 20 seconds for the next video section to build up in the system buffer. That next video section can then be replayed at a higher speed than that at which it was recorded in the buffer so as to improve the perceived quality.

Further pre-recorded data packets may be used to make up the final programme. For example an illustration of the golfer's technique of relevance to the particular hole may be taken from a library of information held on a CD in the PC CD drive, that information being displayed in section A of the screen whilst a sponsors message appears in place of the course plan in section B.

Section D of the screen shows icons, in the illustrated case numbers, which are either subjective ratings by the programme producer of the significance of associated programme elements, or identify particular events in a manner similar to the football example illustrated in Figures 5 to 7a. This makes it possible for the user to jump between sections of the programme, repeating sections of interest at will, thereby once again obtain control over the programme as a whole.

It will be appreciated that programme elements can be reproduced serially, that is a programme could be made up of programme elements presented one at a time with no overlap between successive elements, or in parallel, that is a programme may be made up of programme elements some of which will be presented simultaneously. The

simultaneous presentation of programme elements could enhance a user's appreciation in various circumstances. For example, if a programme to be presented to a user is intended to represent the progress of a car race, most of a display screen could be occupied by an image showing the two leading cars in the race, with the remaining area of the screen showing an image representing the approach to the finish line of that race. Such combinations of images can enhance the appreciation of a programme by linking together two events where a first one of the events (the relative position of the two leading cars) and a second event (their approach to the finishing line) is of significance to an overall appreciation of the subject of the programme.

It will also be appreciated that combinations of images can be presented either serially or in parallel so as to enhance the impact of advertisements by linking the presentation of particular advertisements to the occurrence of particular events. For example, programme elements representing the progress of a motor race may be combined with a programme element representing advertising images the presentation of which can be linked to the progress of the race. One possibility would be to put on the screen advertising material relevant to the sponsor of a race car or the supplier of tyres to a race car at the time that race car successfully crosses the finishing line. A sponsor's message could thus be superimposed on or otherwise combined with images of the winning race car and driver.

The embodiments of the invention described above assume that programme element classification is controlled by the source of the programme elements. It is possible however for a user of the system to determine the programme element classifications, either to replace classifications set by the programme element source, or to establish a set of programme elements and associated classifications from an unclassified broadcast programme. For example, a user could receive a broadcast distributed programme representing an event, store the entire broadcast, divide the stored programme into programme elements of interest, and set classifications for each programme element of interest. Thus a user could classify programme elements

related to a sporting event on a basis ideally suited to the interests of that user, thereby enabling a subsequent reproduction of the programme elements in a manner controlled by reference to the user's own classification system. A user would not then be forced to rely upon the classification system considered appropriate by the programme element source but could set up classifications matching the particular user's interests however idiosyncratic those interests might be.

Programme element classification can be used in a variety of ways, for example to "time stamp" the beginning of one programme element in an assembled programme made up from a series of sequentially presented programme elements. Thus a user wishing to suspend a programme for a period of time so as to enable for example a telephone call to be answered could in effect apply a "time stamp" classification to the programme element being watched at the time the decision to suspend is made, the applied classification being a flag identifying the point in the assembled programme to which the viewer will wish to return after viewing restarts. The time stamp classification would in effect modify the manner in which stored programme elements are presented by causing the system to bypass all earlier programme elements in the series of programme elements making up the assembled programme to be viewed.

In embodiments of the invention described with reference to Figures 3 and 4, programme elements are classified by reference to a "value" assessment of individual elements. In the embodiment of the invention described with reference to Figures 7 and 7a, classification is by reference to the nature of the event. It will be appreciated that various graphical representations of the classifications associated with individual programme elements could be presented to users. For example, in a classification system based on programme element "values" on a scale of 1 to 10, the values of a series of programme elements representing successive events in a real-time broadcast programme may be presented in the form of a bar chart, each bar of the chart having a length corresponding to the value in the range 1 to 10 allocated to a respective programme element. Such a presentation of the classifications of individual

programme elements would enable a user to rapidly access any series of programme elements which on the basis of the allocated value classifications is likely to be of significant interest.

An overview of a system operating in accordance with the present invention will now be described with reference to figure 10. Scheduled programme data comprising conventional televisual images and sound making up programmes to be distributed is stored in a scheduled programme data file 21. A distributed programme is input to a classifier 22 which an operator may use to classify the programme into a number of constituent programme elements each representing an event. Classification codes appropriate to the events are written to a data file 23. These classification codes will be referred to below as "event data". The distributed programme and event data files are then broadcast by a broadcast server 24 to a home terminal 25 which a user may operate to view the classified programme data in the manner described above, and as further described below. In essence, the event data file allows a user greater control over what is viewed, and allows easy direct access to specific parts of the programme data, in particular using icons similar to those illustrated in Figure 8.

To aid understanding of one embodiment of the present invention, a detailed specific example will now be presented, referring to classification, broadcast, home recording and playback of a distributed programme which represents the Wimbledon Tennis Final. This programme is hereinafter called the Wimbledon programme. In accordance with the present invention, the images and sound making up the Wimbledon programme are transmitted from a broadcaster to a receiver using conventional means which may comprise digital satellite, digital terrestrial, analog terrestrial, cable or other conventional televisual transmission. The Wimbledon programme is considered to be one of a number of events which have hierarchical relationships and which itself comprises a number of events.

Referring to figure 11, there is illustrated an upper part of a classification hierarchy suitable for classifying distributed programmes. Each node of the tree structure corresponds to an event or a group of events at a common level in the hierarchy. The root node of the tree is the "TV" event which generically represents all television. The "TV" node has a number of child nodes such as "Sport", "news" etc, although only the "SPORT" event node is shown in Figure 11. Similarly, the "SPORT" node has a number of child nodes, although only the "TENNIS" node is illustrated in figure 11. The "TENNIS" node in turn has a number of child nodes, which in the current example relate to tennis championships. In this case only the "WIMBLEDON" node is displayed. The "WIMBLEDON" node has a number of child events relating to matches within the Wimbledon championship. These nodes are collectively denoted by a node "MATCHES" which is illustrated with broken lines to show that it does, in fact, comprise a number of different match nodes at the same level in the hierarchy. Similarly, the next level down from "MATCHES" is "GAMES" which again comprises a number of different game events and is illustrated using broken lines. Within a single game, actions taken by the players can be classified as one of a number of different events. These events are collectively denoted by an "ACTIONS" node which is again illustrated using broken lines to indicate that each game comprises a series of actions represented by events at the same level in the hierarchy.

Figures 12A and 12B illustrate a hierarchy suitable for classifying the Wimbledon programme. The top level of the hierarchy shown in Figure 12A is a "TENNIS" node, and corresponds to the "TENNIS" node of figure 11. This hierarchy is used by the classifier during a classification sequence. The hierarchy of figure 12A is supplemented by that of figure 12B, which provides an additional layer of classification at the point 12B-12B of figure 12A.

The hierarchy of Figure 12A has "TENNIS" as its root node. The "TENNIS" node has four children which represent different tennis championships *viz* "WIMBLEDON", "FRENCH OPEN", "US OPEN", and "AUSTRALIAN OPEN".

The next level of the hierarchy comprises matches which are children of the "WIMBLEDON" node. It will be appreciated that the other championship nodes will have similar children which are omitted from Figure 12A for reasons of clarity. The match nodes which are children of the "WIMBLEDON" node are "MIXED DOUBLES", "WOMEN'S DOUBLES", "MEN'S DOUBLES" and a generic node "DOUBLES". Each of these nodes in turn has nodes to represent games within a match, and these are illustrated in Figure 12B. Nodes illustrated in Figure 12B include "GAME 1" and GAME 2" to represent different games. A "LOVE 30" node is also shown as an example of a node which can be used to indicate a score during a match.

Referring back to Figure 12A, each of the lower nodes of Figure 12B has children representing actions within a game exemplified by nineteen leaf nodes shown on the lower three levels of figure 12A. The leaf nodes representing actions are distributed over three levels, although they all have the same level within the hierarchal classification system. Each of the nodes of Figures 13A and 12B represents an "event", and thus events may be defined which are themselves made up from a series of lower level events and may form part of a higher level event.

A suitable classifier will now be described. In a preferred embodiment of the present invention the classifier is provided by means of a computer program which executes on a suitable device such as a personal computer to provide a user interface which allows a classification operator to perform classification of scheduled programmes.

The classification operator logs on to the software application which is executed to provide the classifier. This log on process will identify an operator profile for the operator, indicating which programmes may be classified by that operator. This is achieved by using a conventional log-on procedure where an operator inputs a name and associated password. These log-on criteria allow a profile for that operator to be located in a central database. Each profile stores permission information determining programme types which may be classified by that operator. The permissions will

allow different operators to be considered as experts in different fields, and to perform classification only in their specialised fields. For example, an operator may be allowed to classify distributed programmes relating to sport, but not scheduled programmes related to science or vice versa. More specifically, an operator may be allowed to classify distributed programmes related to soccer, but not allowed to classify programmes related to tennis. A classification operator can be given permissions such that they can classify more than one type of scheduled programme.

The permissions allocated to a particular operator determine the programmes to which the operator has access, and accordingly the content which the operator is able to classify. When performing classification, the classifier software uses data files hereinafter referred to as palette files which define buttons which the operator may use to generate a classification sequence of events. In order to provide flexibility, a preferred embodiment uses the Extensible Markup Language (XML) to define palette files. A general knowledge of XML commands and concepts is assumed here, but a more detailed description can be found in Petrycki L and Posner J: "XML in a Nutshell", O'Reilly & Associates Inc, January 2001, the contents of which are herein incorporated by reference.

Appendix 1 of this specification illustrates a suitable format for an XML document type definition (DTD) for a palette file. Referring to the code of appendix 1, the first line of the XML file states that a palette (which is defined by a file in accordance with this DTD) contains one or more panels. Line 2 indicates that each panel includes zero or more buttons.

Lines 3 to 8 of the XML file define the attributes of a panel. Each panel has:

name - a textual description of the palette of buttons . This will appear on the tab if there is no image, or will be used as a tool tip if an image icon is supplied. If no name is supplied, a default value of "unknown" is used.

iconfile - an image file that may be used in place of text. This is an optional attribute.

mnemonic – a hotkey shortcut for this panel. Again, this is an optional attribute.

type – either static or dynamic. Dynamic is the default. The specific example relating to the Wimbledon programme uses a static palette, although operation of a dynamic palette will be described later.

Lines 9 to 13 of the DTD file define a tab element. Tab elements have no children, and a single compulsory attribute url which is used to provide an icon for the tab. The tab feature allows buttons within a panel to display further collections of buttons. Again, the significance of this is discussed later.

Line 14 of the XML file defines the structure of an icon button. Each Button may contain zero or more child buttons, zero or more tabs, and zero or more arbitrary attributes.

Lines 15 to 19 of the XML file indicate that each button has the following attributes:

name – the name of the event, this name will be associated with the event and transmitted to end users. A default value of "unknown event" is used if no name is provided in the XML file.

iconfile – the image associated with this event. This icon should be available to the end user. This is a required attribute.

classname – this is the java class used to maintain information about this event. At least one class for each genre must be defined (e.g. Sport, news etc.). More specific

classes should be defined for lower level events. This is an optional attribute. The class hierarchy used to classify events is described later.

category – if the event is not of a special class, then it's hierarchical definition is placed into the category attribute. This is again an optional attribute

mnemonic – this will be used to define a key that will start this event. The character (modified by the system meta key – ALT on Windows) will invoke this event when the panel containing the event button is in focus. This is an optional attribute.

defaultlevel – this is the default hierarchical level associated with the event. For example, the "TV" event would have a level of zero, as the event will only ever appear as a level zero event.

Lines 22 to 24 of the XML DTD define an attribute which can be child of a button as described above. It can be seen from line 24 that the attribute element contains a single XML attribute which is an attribute name.

Appendix 2 lists an XML file in accordance with the DTD of Appendix 1, which defines a palette of buttons suitable for classifying the Wimbledon programme of the present example. The buttons defined in the XML file are those shown in the hierarchy of figure 12B. Further details of these buttons will be described later.

Referring to figure 13A, there is illustrated a user interface provided by the classification software to allow classification of the Wimbledon programme. The classification software shown is programmed using the Java programming language, and the graphical user interface is provided using components of the Swing toolkit.

A main classification window 26 comprises a conventional title bar 27 which contains an indication of the window's purpose. The main window 26 further comprises an area 28 defining a row of buttons which can be used to read and write data from files

and perform other housekeeping functions, and a palette panel 29 containing an upper area 30 displaying two buttons, selection of one of which results in the display of an associated set of buttons in an area 31. The buttons in area 31 allow classification of a distributed programme. Each button in area 30 provides a different set of buttons in area 31, thereby allowing different programmes or different events within a particular programme to be classified in an appropriate manner. The main window 26 further comprises an area 32 containing a number of buttons providing control functions, an area 33, referred to as a history panel, to show a currently operative classification (this area is empty in figure 13 because no classification has taken place), and a hierarchical parent panel 34, the function of which is described further below.

An operator logs on to the classification software as described above. The operator can then use any one of the standard buttons in area 28 to initiate the classification process. The buttons in area 28 are always displayed regardless of the operator profile. At this initial stage, areas 30 and 31 are blank. If a button 35 is selected one or more palette files may be opened. The files which can be opened in this way are determined by the operator's profile. Selection of the button 35 causes a conventional file selector dialog as shown in figure 13B to be displayed, allowing the operator to select a file to be opened from a list set out in the dialog. Files opened in this way are parsed using a parser which checks the file for conformity with both the XML DTD of Appendix 1 and the standard XML definition. It should be noted that parsing XML files can be a costly operation in terms of time, however this overhead is considered acceptable here because files are parsed only at the beginning of a classification process. Each file opened using the button 35 causes a button to be added to the area 30, each button so added corresponding to a tab related to a number of buttons which are displayed in the area 31.

When the operator has opened all files which are considered relevant for classification of the programme or programmes to be classified, classification can begin. It can be seen in the example of figure 13A that two palette files suitable for the classification

of tennis have been loaded. The button 36 (which is denoted by a tennis ball icon) is associated with the set of buttons shown in area 31. These buttons are appropriate to classify the Wimbledon programme of the present example. The purpose of the further button (labelled Game 1) in area 30 is described below.

Classification of the Wimbledon programme in real time during broadcast of the programme is now described. The operator logs on and opens the relevant palettes as described above. A display screen of the classifier then resembles the view of figure 13A. Prior to broadcast of the Wimbledon programme, and prior to classification beginning, the operator may transmit a packet of data to home viewers indicating that the Wimbledon programme is about to begin. This is known as a Programme Event Notification Packet. The significance of this packet will be described later.

The classification operator will be aware that a tennis match at Wimbledon is to be classified and will accordingly select a button 37 from the palette panel when the scheduled programme begins. This button 37 corresponds to an event which represents a distributed programme as broadcast, and such an event is hereinafter referred to as a programme event. It will be appreciated that a number of Wimbledon programme events each of which is classified as a hierarchical event may be broadcast over the two week period of the Wimbledon Championships. Selection of the button 37 will result in a copy of the button's icon being copied to the history panel 33. A representation will also be copied to the parent panel 34, the function of which will be described later. Figure 14A shows the window 26 after the selection of the Wimbledon event.

Selection of the button 37 representing a Wimbledon programme event results in the creation of a representation of the event within the classifier software. The representation of events is object-orientated and uses the Java programming language. Standard features of the Java programming language are assumed here. More detailed information can be found in one of the large number of widely available Java

textbooks such as "Java in a Nutshell" published by O'Reilley and Associates Inc. The description of the creation of Java objects corresponding to events is discussed later, after a consideration of the selection and display of events in the interface provided to the user.

Referring to figure 14B, the classification operator subsequently selects a button 38 to indicate that an event is to be added which is at a lower hierarchical level. This button selection is recorded by the classifier and the current classification level is recorded as level 2, as opposed to the previous top level (level 1). The classification operator then adds an event at this lower level by pressing a button 39 which represents a Mixed Doubles match. The icon of button 39 is added to the history panel 33 of figure 14B. It can also be seen that the parent panel 34 includes a copy of each of the icons shown in the history panel 33. The parent panel 34 is configured to show the currently active event at each hierarchical level, as will be shown further below.

Having created the mixed doubles event, the classification operator again selects the button 38 to move to a still lower level of the hierarchy (level 3). The next event to be classified is the first game within the mixed doubles match. A suitable button 40 is provided on area 30 (Figure 14C). Selection of button 40 displays the set of buttons shown in figure 14C in area 31. The operator then selects a "Game 1" button 41 to perform the classification. This button selection again results in the icon of button 41 appearing in the areas 33 and 34.

The next classification relates to events occurring within the first game. The classification operator again uses the button 38 to move down in the hierarchy. The operator selects the button 36 so as to display in area 31 buttons which are appropriate for classification of actions within a game. This is shown in figure 14D. A button 42 to create a "Serve" event is selected resulting in the icon of button 42 being placed in the history panel 33. Immediately thereafter an "Ace" event occurs and is classified by the classification operator selecting a suitable button 43 which results in the "Ace"

icon of button 43 being placed in the history panel 33. This is shown in figure 14D.The parent panel is updated for each event, such that after the "Ace" event, the parent panel comprises the top level "Wimbledon" event followed by the second level "Mixed Doubles" event, followed by the third level "Game Event" and the fourth level "Ace" event. As the parent panel shows currently open events, the "Serve" event represented in the history panel 33 is not shown in the parent panel 34. The "Serve" event ended upon creation of the "Ace event" because the two events are both at the fourth level of the event hierarchy, and no hierarchical level can have more than one event open at any given time.

At this stage in the classification process, the classification operator decides that the previously classified "Ace" event which is currently active is of great entertainment value. For this reason the operator presses a five star button 44 (figure 14E) which results in five stars being placed alongside the "Ace" icon in the history panel 33. This action updates the rating variable of the "Ace" event. The next event is a further serve which is again created using the button 42, and this results in a further "Serve" icon being placed in the history panel 33. The parent panel is also updated to show that the currently active event at level 4 is the latest serve event.

In figure 14F, it can be seen that following the latest "Serve" event, a return event occurs which is denoted by selecting button 45 (figure 14E). The associated icon is added to the parent panel 33. This event is subsequently rated as a two-star return denoted by two stars to the right hand side of the icon. Following the return event, "Game 1" finishes (it will be appreciated that in a real tennis game further actions may occur within a single game). The operator at this point presses a button 46 to move to a higher hierarchical level and then selects a button 47 from the buttons in area 31 associated with the button 40 in area 30 to indicate the start of the second game. Selection of the "Game 2" button 47 will result in the return event and the "Game 1" event being considered finished at the same time. This is because the "Game 2" event closes the "Game 1" event at the same hierarchical level and also

closes any of its children, of which the "Return" event is one. The "Game 2" event is denoted in the history panel 33 by the icon of button 47. The parent panel 34 is also updated to show that the Game 2 event is currently open at level 3 of the hierarchy, while no event is open at level 4.

Figure 15 shows a Java class hierarchy of objects which are instantiated by event creation using the classifier. The top level class of the hierarchy is the EventBase class, the features of which are discussed later. The subsequent level of the hierarchy provides TriggerEvent and ControlEvent classes. ControlEvents are related to system data and are discussed later. All event data created by the classifier is represented by sub-classes of TriggerEvent. More specifically, all objects created in the current example are instances of the MapEvent class. Instantiation of other classes will be described later.

The MapEvent class has the following instance variables which are used to denote attributes of an event represented by the class:

Category - This defines the location of the object within a hierarchy used for classification. This will correspond with the category attribute specified for the appropriate button within the XML palette file of Appendix 2.

Sequence No - This is a unique identifier which is allocated by the classifier. This ensures that each event can be referenced uniquely.

StartTime - This identifies the time at which the event represented by the object begins. It is measured in seconds from a predefined start point. Thus all times allocated by the classifier are consistent.

EndTime - This identifies the time at which the event represented by the object ends and is measured in the same way as the start time.

Duration - This indicates the duration of the event. This provides an alternative to EndTime or allows some redundancy within the object representation.

Channel - This indicates the broadcast channel (e.g. CNN) on which the event is occurring. In the present example channel is represented by an integer, and a simple mapping operation will allow channel names to be derived from these numbers.

Programme ID - This indicates a distributed programme which corresponds to the event or within which the event is occurring. It is used only for distributed programme events, and is undefined for all other events.

Name - A text string providing a user with a meaningful name for the event.

Parent - An identifier allowing an event's parent event to be linked. This will be described in further detail below. Top-level events, such as the Wimbledon event shown in Figure 14A, have no parent, and this is denoted by a parent identifier of –1 in the MapEvent object

Iconfile - This is an identifier of a file containing an icon which is used to represent the event of the object.

Rating - It has been described above that an operator can add a subjective rating to an event to indicate its interest or entertainment level. This is stored in the rating variable.

Figures 16A to 16F shows instances of the MapEvent class which are created to represent the events shown in Figures 14A to 14F. Each object creation, and each update to an object's variables, will result in the generation of a suitable data packet for transmission to the home receiver, and these data packets are shown in Figures

17A to 17F. Figures 17A to 17F respectively represent the data packets created by the object creation and object updates shown in figures 16A to 16F. Similarly, figures 16A and 16F represent objects created in response to event classification shown in figures 14A to 14F respectively. Figures 16A to 16F and figures 17A to 17F are described in parallel here.

Creation of the Wimbledon event as shown in Figure 14A will result in an object Ob1 being created, as illustrated in figure 16A. It can be seen that the category of Ob1 is "tv.sport.tennis.wimbledon" which is a logical category for an event relating to the Wimbledon Programme. The sequence number of the event is 00001 as this is the first event generated by the classifier and the start time variable is also set. A string of "#" characters is used throughout this example to indicate an unknown value. This is appropriate in figure 16A as it will be appreciated that the EndTime and Duration of the Wimbledon programme event are not known when the object is created. As no subjective rating has been allocated to the event, this is set to a default value of 0. The parent variable is set to –1 to indicate that the Wimbledon programme event is a top level event. The other variables are initialised to values appropriate to the Wimbledon event.

Creation of the Wimbledon event and the associated object Ob1 will result in a data packet Pkt1 being created for transmission to home viewers with the associated programme data. The format of this data packet is schematically illustrated in figure 17A. It can be seen that all instance variables for which values are defined are included. Undefined attributes are not included thereby reducing bandwidth requirements. Packet start (<PKTSTRT>) and end (<PKTEND>) tags are also included in the packet format . Following the <PKTSTRT> tag there is a tag <NEW> indicating that this is the first data packet associated with the sequence number quoted therein. In the case of second and subsequent packets relating to a particular object, the <NEW> tag is replaced by an <UPD> tag to denote that the packet contains

update information. Packets using the <UPD> tag are shown in subsequent figures. The actual transmission of these packets is described later.

Referring to figure 16B, a MapEvent object Ob2 representing the mixed doubles match of figure 14B is shown. It can be seen that the category variable is appropriately set. It should be noted that although the Wimbledon programme event and the mixed double event may have started simultaneously, there is a slight difference in start time which is due to the reaction time of the classification operator. Other variables can be seen to be set appropriately for the Mixed Doubles event. In particular, it can be seen that the programme ID variable is undefined, because this variable is set only for top level programme events. Other events are linked to a programme by means of the parent ID variable which in this case is correctly set to 0001 which is the sequence number of the Wimbledon Event.

Creation of the object Ob2 shown in Figure 16B results in a data packet Pkt2 shown in Figure 17B being created for broadcast to home viewers. The data packet shown in Figure 17B corresponds to the variables of Figure 16B in the same way that the data packet of Figure 17A corresponds to the object of Figure 16A.

Creation of the Game 1 event of figure 14C results in the creation of object Ob3 which is illustrated in figure 16C. It can be seen that all variables are appropriately set for the Game 1 event, and in particular the parent variable is set to indicate that the Game 1 event is a child of the Mixed Doubles event represented by Ob2. A corresponding data packet Pkt3 is generated which is illustrated in figure 17C.

Referring to Figure 16D in combination with Figure 14D, the objects created in relation to the events shown in Figure 14D will be described. Selection of the Serve event using button 42 creates a suitable MapEvent Object Ob4. At the time of this object's creation, it is not known when the event will end, and thus the EndTime field is undefined, however, creation of the "Ace" event using the button 43 of figure 14D

results in the creation of the MapEvent Object Ob5 and also causes the EndTime field of the "Serve" object Ob4 to be completed. Figure 16D shows the state of the objects Ob4 and Ob5 at the end of the sequence of events represented in figure 14D and accordingly object Ob4 includes an EndTime value. It can be seen from figure 16D that each of the objects has a parent of 0003 denoting that the objects are both children of the "GameOne" event, as is schematically illustrated in the history panel 33 of the interface shown in Figure 14D.

The creation of the Serve event results in the transmission of a data packet Pkt4 of Figure 17D which is of a similar format to the packets shown in Figures 17A, 17B and 17C. Creation of the "Ace" event results in the transmission of Pkt 5 which includes an EndTime and duration for the Serve event which are now known. This packet includes an <UPD> tag as described above to indicated that the packet contains information relating to a previously transmitted object. Pkt6 is created to represent creation of the "Ace" event. Pkt5 and Pkt6 are sent at substantially the same time.

The next classification action as illustrated in Figure 14E is the rating of the "Ace" event as a five-star event. This action updates the rating variable of the "Ace" event. This is shown by an update to the rating variable of Ob5 as illustrated in figure 16E. This rating also results in a suitable data packet Pkt7 shown in Figure 17E being transmitted to home viewers. The purpose of the data packet Pkt7 is to update the information stored by the receiver to indicate that the "Ace" event is of high entertainment value. Again, the packet Pkt 7 corresponds to an update to a previously created object and therefore contains an <UPD> tag.

The next event created in figure 14E is a serve event which is again created using the button 42. The creation of this "Serve" event causes the creation of a suitable MapEvent object Obj6 shown in figure 16E and the creation of a suitable data packet Pkt8 shown in figure 17E.

Figure 16F shows the objects created and updated as a consequence of the classification shown in figure 14F. Creation and rating of the return event results in the creation of a suitable map event object Ob7, the end time being inserted when the "Game 2" event is created". The "Game 2" event is represented by Ob8. Furthermore, the creation of the "Game 2" event object Ob8 results in an update to the object Ob 3 representing the "Game 1" event. This is shown as an update to Ob3 in Figure 16F. It can be seen from figure 16F that both the return object Ob7 and the "Game 1" object Ob3 have the same end time, as the EndTime of each of these events is determined by the start of the Game 2 event represented by Ob 8.

Figure 17F shows the data packets transmitted in relation to the events of figure 14F. Creation of the return event represented by Ob 7 results in the creation of a data packet Pkt9, Pkt10 is transmitted to indicate the rating applied by the classification operator to the return event represented by the object Ob7. Pkt11 it transmitted to indicate the creation of an object Ob8 representing the "Game 2" event, Pkt12 is transmitted to indicate the end of the "Game 1" event and Pkt 13 is sent to indicate the end of the "Return" event.

The temporal sequence of events is shown in Figure 18. Time is indicated on the horizontal axis, with events appearing in hierarchical order, with higher level events appearing towards the top of the figure. At time *t0* the object Ob1 is created and the data packet Pkt 1 is transmitted. At time *t1*, the object Ob2 is created and the data packet Pkt 2 is transmitted. At time *t2* the object Ob3 is created and the data packet Pkt 3 is transmitted. At time *t3* the object Ob4 is created and the associated data packet Pkt 4 is transmitted. It should be appreciated that the creation of the objects set out thus far and the transmission of the associated data packets will occur in a very short time period, and thus the elapsed time between *t0* and *t3* is small.

At time *t4* the object Ob 5 is created and two data packets, Pkt 5 and Pkt 6 are transmitted. Pkt 5 provides an end time for the "Serve" event represented by Ob 4 and Pkt 6 represents the creation of the "Ace" event object Ob 5.

At time *t5* the rating of the "Ace" event represented by object Ob 5 is entered in Ob 5, the rating data being transmitted by means of data packet Pkt 7. The second "Serve" event creates an object Ob 6 and this object creation is reported by the transmission of the data packet Pkt 8.

The creation of the "Return" event at time *t6* results in the creation of Ob 7 and the transmission of the data packet Pkt 9. The subsequent rating of this event at some time between *t6* and *t7* results in the transmission of the data packet Pkt 10. Creation of the "Game 2" event marks the end of the "Game 1" event and the "Return" event as described above. Creation of the "Game 2" event results in the generation of the object Ob 8 at time *t7* and the transmission (at the same time) of the data packet Pkt 11 to indicate this object's creation. At substantially the same time two data packets Pkt 12 and Pkt 13 are transmitted to indicate that the "Game 1" event and the "Return" event have finished.

Referring back to figure 10, the process of classification using the classifier 22 to generate a file of event data 23 has been described. Furthermore, the transmission of event data in data packets, alongside programme data from the programme data file 21 by means of the broadcast server 24, has also been described. Packets transmitted by the broadcast server 24 are received by a home terminal 25. The subsequent process at the home terminal 25 will now be described.

Data packets as illustrated in figures 17A to 17F are received by a home terminal and processed by computer program code to re-generate EventBase objects of the type used by the classifier. Given that this embodiment of the invention relies on object oriented programming techniques, the computer program executed by the receiver can

be conveniently implemented using the Java programming language. Packets are received and processed to determine what action should be taken. If a data packet contains a <NEW> tag following the <PKTSTRT> tag, as in Pkt 1 of figure 17A for example, the computer program will create an EventBase object, and instantiate the variables provided in the data packet with the values provided in the data packet. If a data packet contains an <UPD> tag following the <PKTSTRT> tag, as in Pkt 5 of figure 17D, the program code will use the information contained in the data packet to assign values to the various variables in the previously created object having that sequence number.

The home receiver is provided with means to store a user's event preferences, such that the home receiver can act differently in response to different types of objects being created or updated. Typically the actions which may be taken by the home receiver will involve recording incoming programme content, stopping to record incoming programme content, or informing a user that particular programme content is being received. A profile for a user is stored within the home receiver and this profile is compared with the category field of each created EventBase object (or MapEvent which is a child of EventBase in the hierarchy of Figure 15)

The home receiver is provided with software which allows a user to specify event types of interest. This can conveniently be a hierarchical display, with selection of a higher level event automatically selecting all lower level events. For example, if a user indicates that they are interested in all sport, all MapEvent objects having a category beginning with "tv.sport" will activate the receiver to take some action. Alternatively, if the user is only interested in aces in a particular tennis match, it can be specified that only events having a category of "tv.sport.tennis.ace" should activate the receiver. The interface also provides functionality such that the user can specify a rating above which the receiver should be activated, such that only events of a certain category with, for example a four or five star rating activate the home receiver.

The profile built up by a user using the interface described above can conveniently be stored as a series of triples (i.e. ordered sets having three elements) of the form:

(Category, action required, rating)

where Category defines a category, action required is a flag indicating the action which is to be taken by the home receiver upon encountering an object having that category, and rating is a minimum rating required to activate the receiver.

The home receiver creates and updates objects as described above. The home receiver also constantly buffers all received programme content. If an object is created or updated which matches the category field, and the action required is "record", buffered content is copied to the recorded programme data and recording continues. More details of the implementation of the home receiver will be described later.

To add further functionality, the broadcaster may transmit attribute data packets alongside the information set out above. For example, in the example of the Wimbledon programme set out above, a "Game" event may have two textual attributes representing the names of the players. Such attributes can be transmitted to the home receiver and can be specified using the profile definition features set out above, allowing a user to indicate a particular interest in particular players for example. If attributes are to be used in this way the objects of figures 16 will require a further attribute variable which can conveniently be providing using a dynamic array of strings, thereby allowing any number of attributes to be specified. Similarly, the tuples defining the profile stored at the home receiver will become quartuples (i.e. ordered sets having four elements) of the form:

(Category, action required, rating. Attribute[])

where attribute[] is an array of attributes.

The example presented above relates to the classification, broadcast and reception of the Wimbledon programme. It should be realised that the present invention can be applied to a wide range of broadcast content, and is not in any way limited to tennis or sports programmes.

For example, Figure 19 shows a news programme split up into a number of events. The horizontal axis of the figure represents time, and time advances from left to right. The news programme occurs between time t_0 and time t_{11}. The horizontal axis is not drawn to scale.

The entire programme is a news programme event, and any event data representation for that programme must record that a news event begins at time t_0 and ends at time t_{11}. The news event comprises five sub-events. A first event relates to home news and occurs between times t_0 and t_1, a second event relates to world news and occurs between times t_1 and t_2, a third event relates to regional news and occurs between times t_2 and t_3, a fourth event relates to sports news and occurs between times t_3 and t_9, and a fifth event is a weather forecast which occurs between times t_9 and t_{11}.

The five events identified thus far are all constituents of the news events, and occur at the next hierarchical level to the news programme event itself. Furthermore, each of these events are sequential, with one event beginning as the previous event ends. As will now be described it is not always the case that events at one level in the hierarchy are always sequential.

For example, the sports news event comprises three sub events. A first sub-event relates to basketball and occurs between times t_3 and t_4, a second sub-event relates to baseball and occurs between times t_4 and t_5, and a third sub-event relates to motor sport and occurs between times t_5 and t_9. The motor sport item in turn contains three sub-events. A first sub event represents a cornering sequence, a second sub-event

represents an overtaking sequence and a third sub-event represents a crash. It can be seen from figure 19, that the overtaking event occurs between times t_6 and t_8 and the crash event occurs between times t_7 and t_9, where t_8 occurs after t_7. Thus, the overtaking and crash events overlap. This can be seen to be useful, as a user wishing to skip directly to the crash event is likely to desire some footage showing the cause of the crash, which in this case is the overtaking event. Thus, in a system in accordance with the present invention events can overlap, and one event need not necessarily end when another begins. This feature can conveniently be provided by presenting the classification operator with a button which acts to start a further event at the same hierarchical level, before closing the previous event. It can also be seen from figure 19 that the weather event contains two sub events, one relating to national weather and one relating to regional weather.

The description of programmes made up of events as set out above leads to a hierarchical event structure. Referring to figure 20, there is illustrated a tree structure showing the same event data as that illustrated in figure 19. The top level TV node and the sport node referred to in the Wimbledon programme example are also shown. The news node represents the news event, and this node has five children representing the sub-events identified above. The sub-events relating to home news, world news and regional news are leaves within the tree structure, as they have no sub-events. In contrast, the node representing the weather event has two child nodes to represent the national and regional weather sub-events, and the node representing the sport event has three sub-nodes representing its sub-events. Two of the child nodes of the sport event node are leaves having no sub-events, while the node representing the motor-racing event has three child nodes representing sub-events. Each of these child nodes are leaves in the tree structure.

Classification of the news programme as discussed with reference to figures 19 and 20 will result in objects being created and data packets being transmitted in a similar

way to that described with reference of figures 16 and 17 illustrating the Wimbledon programme.

As a final example of event classification, reference is made to figure 21, which illustrates events suitable to classify a soccer match. It will be appreciated that this hierarchy can be encapsulated in an XML file of the form of appendix 2 and can be used to classify soccer matches as described previously with reference to figures 7 and 8.

The examples set out above describe a situation where classification is performed in real time as the programme is being transmitted. It will be appreciated that the invention is also applicable in situations where a classification sequence is performed offline in advance of a broadcast and stored in a suitable file. Such event data is then broadcast alongside the programme data as described above. In this case, the objects created by the classification can suitably be stored in an XML file such that each object has a MapEvent entry having attributes appropriate to the particular object.

When performing classification as described previously, it will be appreciated that there may be a noticeable gap between the start of an event and an operator recording that event classification. Two latency compensation methods are provided to mitigate this effect. First, each event is subject to a default offset, whereby an event is considered to have begun a predetermined number of seconds before the classification is performed. Furthermore, a set of buttons are provided whereby an operator can increase the default offset. This is particularly useful in any case where an operator is aware of a delay, and can manually insert a greater latency. These features ensure that a classification will be timed so as to ensure that an event is not truncated at its start. Using these latency compensation techniques will result in amendments being made to the instance variables of the object representing the event, and will also create data packets suitable for transmission to home receivers to indicate these changes.

Referring back to figure 13A the interface shows the current default latency as "0 secs" (see reference 48). This default latency can be amended by using a button 49 which displays a suitable dialog box. Three buttons 50 allow the operator to use a greater latency if he is aware that there has been a particular delay. The buttons 50 simply subtract 2, 5 or 10 seconds respectively from the start time of the current event, and make appropriate changes to the Java object representing the event. A suitable data packet is also generated for transmission to the home receiver.

Still referring to figure 13A, a button 51 is provided to perform an "undo" function. Selecting this button will delete the currently selected event and reopen the previous event by deleting its finish time.

A button 52 is used to stop the currently active event without creating another event. Repeated use of the button 52 will close events at higher hierarchical levels until all events are closed. This button is intended for use at the end of a classification sequence.

When an event begins, it will not always be clear what its outcome will be. For example, in a tennis game when a ball is struck it may be an "Ace" event or a "Fault" event, although it will not be known which until after the ball has been struck. It is desirable that the event is considered to have started shortly before the ball is struck. Accordingly, a tag button 53 is provided. This tag button is pressed when an event begins and it is not clear how the event should be classified. When the classification becomes clear an appropriate button is selected from the palette panel, and this classification is timed to have begun at the point at which the tag button 53 was pressed (subject to any latency compensation as described above).

When performing an offline classification it may be desirable to retrospectively amend properties of events. Referring now to figure 22, there is illustrated the screen

of figure 14F with an overlaid properties dialog 54 which can be used to inspect and amend event properties. The dialog shown relates to the "Ace" event indicated by the icon 46 in the history panel 33. An icon 55 is provided within the dialog to indicate the type of event to which the dialog relates. An area 56 includes nine lines of text relating to the event. A first line represents sequence number, a second line the sequence number of the parent event, a third line indicates the start time, and a fourth line indicates the stop time. A fifth line contains a channel identifier, a sixth line contains a category indication, a seventh line indicates the file name of the icon which should be used to denote the event and the eighth line indicates a user readable form of the event's name. A ninth line indicates the rating applied to the event. It can be seen that these attributes correspond closely to those provided by the MapEvent objects illustrated in Figures 16. The attribute values shown in the dialog and identified above are locked such that they can only be inspected, not changed by a user so as to prevent the risk of malfunction. In some cases this dialog will also contain attributes which may be set and amended by a user so as to provide the attribute application and matching functions identified above. The rating applied to an event may be changed using the buttons 57. It can be seen that the attribute values shown in area 56 of figure 22 differ from those shown in the object Ob5 of figure 16E. For example, the sequence number of Ob5 is different to the sequence number shown in Figure 22. It will be appreciated that in an operational system, the attribute values shown in figures 16E and 22 will be consistent.

The final component of the property dialog is a button 58 which is used to define an applet which is applied to an event. The term applet is hereinafter used to mean a Java application which can be executed by a home receiver. Clicking the Applet button 58 results in the display of a dialog allowing a file name to be specified for an applet which should be sent to a receiver alongside the data packets relating to that event. The dialog also allows the operator to set one or more parameters which may be used to customise operation of the Applet at the home receiver.

The Applet feature of an event is potentially very powerful. Possible applications include applications capable of displaying a dialog on a home user's screen allowing the user to take part in an on-line vote using a remote handset associated with the home receiver. Furthermore, applets may be launched which display an icon which can be selected to direct a home user to an appropriate website. For example, during advertising an icon may appear in the top right hand corner of the screen, the user may then select this icon using a button on the remote handset whereupon all or part of a display screen associated with the home receiver displays a website related to the current advertisement. Alternatively an icon may be displayed which is selectable to display a window allowing direct purchase of items related to the advertisement. This may again be achieved using an associated website. Other applets may be launched to link a user to associated programme content, for example if a programme has been recorded and a currently broadcasting programme makes a reference back to that recorded programme an applet can be executed to cause that recorded programme to be displayed. The applet property of an event is realised by transmitting Java classes to the home receiver which may be executed to provide the applet. It will be appreciated that this applet concept is widely applicable and any application which can be written in a suitable programming language can be transmitted to the home terminal for execution alongside the television transmission. It is likely to be particularly applicable when applied to television content relating to advertising. The applet feature is particularly useful because further applications can be added as time progresses giving the system expandability for the future.

A detailed architecture for the implementation of the present invention will now be described with reference to figure 23. The system can be considered to comprise a broadcaster segment 59 and a home receiver segment 60. Programme and event data generated by the broadcaster segment passes to a broadcast interface encoder 61 for broadcast to the receiver segment. This broadcast is schematically represented by a box 62.The broadcast of programme data is conveniently carried out using any conventional transmission technology, while event data can be broadcast using either

the vertical blanking interval of a conventional television broadcast or using an alternative communications channel such as the Internet, or a telephone network.

The broadcaster segment 59 corresponds to the TV image source 6 and the exchange 4 shown in figure 1, or the programme data source 21, classifier 22, event data file 23 and broadcast server 24 of figure 10.

The broadcaster segment comprises a classification section 63 and a server section 64. The classification section equates to the classifier 22 of figure 10 and the server section corresponds to the programme data 21, the event data 22 and the broadcast server 24 of figure 10. The classification section 63 and the server section 64 are connected by a connection 65 which is conveniently provided using Remote Method Invocation provided by the Java programming language.

Operation of the classification section will now be described, where the classification occurs off line, and is stored in a file for later transmission. The classification section 63 is responsible for the classification and controlling of programme events. The created sequence of events relating to a broadcast is hereinafter referred to as an event list. An operator is able to select a programme stored in a programme archive 66 and classify the programme into constituent events using a classification module 67 as an off-line process. A programme is selected by choosing the programme's unique identifier using the classifier software. This creates a lock between the programme and the operator. This ensures that conflicts cannot occur as a result of two operators classifying the same programme concurrently. If an event list already exists for that programme (and is stored in the programme archive 66) the existing event list is copied to a temporary local store 69, and displayed in the classifier software. The operator is then able to classify the programme into its constituent events. The classification section 63 acts as a standalone module and programme event information is written to the programme archive 66 for storage without being broadcast at that time. During creation, the event list is stored in the temporary local

store 69, and is subsequently copied to the programme archive 66. When the operator chooses to save the created event list, the events are copied from the temporary local store to the event database in the server section 64 of the broadcaster segment (described below). When classification is complete, the lock between the programme and the operator is removed such that other suitably authorised users may edit the created event list.

The programme archive 66 may store programmes either in a digital format or on tape. Each programme in the programme archive 66 has associated with it a unique identifier allocated by the administrator which is used to create a lock between an operator and the programme as described above.

It will be appreciated that if classification is occurring in real time, there will be no need to select a programme from the programme archive 66, but instead it will be necessary to select the broadcast channel to which classification is to be applied.

The classification section 63 also provides broadcast event control. Controller software 68 allows an operator to control broadcast of an event list in synchronisation with programme data. This software accurately sets start and stop times for events in relation to broadcast so as to ensure that the event list and programme are synchronised.

The controller manages all aspects of event broadcast control. In particular when a programme that has been classified off line is broadcast, commercial breaks will be inserted into the programme whilst such commercials will not have been included in the version which formed the basis of classification. This means that event timings will be offset. Furthermore, it is desirable that a home user need not rely on a scheduled broadcast start time shown in television listing guides.

The controller component handles these two difficulties. A classification operator, whose profile permits access to the controller software 68, is able to use the controller software 68, to perform the following steps..

Prior to broadcast of a programme beginning, the controller component sends a Programme Event Notification Packet (PENP) to the server section 64 as briefly mentioned above. The server section 64 broadcasts this PENP to viewers at home by means of the broadcast interface 61. Receipt of this packet by home viewers allows recording devices to check whether they are programmed to record the programme, and if so to begin the recorder process and start buffering. The functionality of the home terminal is described later.

When broadcast begins, the operator presses a start button within the user interface of the controller to send a Programme Event Start Packet (PESP) to the server section, and in turn to the home viewers. The events are then transmitted from the event database to the home viewers as they occur in synchronisation with the broadcast. Event transmission is described in further detail below.

When the operator observes the beginning of a commercial break, he selects a pause button within the interface of the controller software 68. This causes a message to be sent to the server suspending transmission of the event list, and beginning transmission of the advertisements. The operator is then able to classify advertisements in real time as broadcast occurs using the classifier component interface described above. When advertisements finish the operator again selects the pause button and transmission of the event list associated with the programme is resumed. In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, all advertisements are considered to be events positioned at the next lowest level of the event hierarchy. That is, advertisements have a relative not absolute hierarchical position.

At the end of the broadcast the operator again selects the start button within the controller interface. The controller component sends a Programme Event End Packet (PEEP) to the server. On receipt of this packet the server broadcasts an appropriate packet to home viewers to denote the end of the programme, and broadcast of the event list is terminated.

It will be appreciated that the controller and classifier components may in practice share a common user interface having shared buttons. For example, the classification software illustrated in figures 13A and 14A to 14F may be amended to include buttons allowing performance of the controller features as described.

The classification section 63 can be operated on a single personal computer having access to the programme archive 66. It is preferred that the operator be provided with a traditional keyboard, as well as a touch sensitive screen to operate the interface of the classifier which is illustrated in figures 13A and 14A to 14F. The touch sensitive screen will allow the operator to quickly select events and other buttons within the interface, and can be considered to be a plurality of mouse-clicks from the point of view of the implemented program code. The keyboard will be used to input more detailed information such as event attributes. The software may be written in the Java programming language and Remote Method Invocation provided by Java may be used to enable communication between the classifier component and other components of the broadcast server.

The second section of the broadcaster segment 59 is the server section 64. The server section 64 will now be described in general terms.

The server section 64 acts as a server for the broadcast section, stores event lists and programme identifiers, and broadcasts event packets. The server section comprises four individual servers 70 each of which is treated as a separate component. The four

servers are an operator details server, a communications server, an identifier server and a programme identifier server. Each of these will be further described below.

The programme identifier and identifier servers are responsible for assigning unique identification tags to programmes and data carriers. The identifiers (IDs) are used to identify each physical data carrier such as a tape or a digital versatile disc (DVD), whilst the programme identifiers (PIDs) are assigned to individual programmes as and when they are classified and become associated with an event list. These two servers will communicate with an event list database 71 to manage the IDs and PIDs. The use of PIDs allows an operator to lock a programme whilst classification is taking place as described above.

The operator details server maintains a permissions containing profile for each operator. It provides an association between a particular operator's ID and the programme types which they are permitted to classify. This information is stored in a database 72 which may be configured by a system administrator. When an operator logs on to either the controller or classifier components, as described above, the operator details server validates this log on and provides controlled access to the various parts of the system by accessing the operator details database 72. This ensures that a programme is only classified by an operator having appropriate expertise.

The communication server communicates with the broadcast interface 61 to broadcast event packets. Events are created using the classifier component and stored in the event list database 71. Control of event broadcast is managed by the controller 68. The communications channel between the communication server and the broadcast interface includes a carousel 73. The carousel allows periodic retransmission of event packets. When an event is broadcast it is placed in a carousel for convenient retransmission if requested. This technique is used in case event packets do not correctly reach their destination. Incorrect transmission may be detected by a receiver using a Cyclic Redundancy Check (CRC) calculation, and may result in a receiver

subsequently requesting retransmission of a particular packet from the carousel. Storage of transmitted packets in the carousel 73 prevents packets having to be regenerated by the classifier or controller.

When a programme is about to be broadcast, the server fetches an appropriate event list from the event list database 71 and prepares to broadcast its constituent events in synchronisation with the programme. This transfer is controlled by a PENP packet sent from the controller component as described above. Similarly, the communications server acts to pause, resume and stop event list broadcast in response to receipt of appropriate commands from the controller component.

In summary, the broadcaster segment 59 incorporates means to classify programmes, store event data, and control transmission of event data to home terminals.

Details of a suitable format for the transmission of event data as denoted by box 62 will now be described. The data packets are created by the classification software as described above and as illustrated in figures 17. However, it will be appreciated that various protocol wrappers must be added to these data packets to enable transmission to home receivers. It should be appreciated that the likely nature of the underlying transmission medium (low bandwidth, and no return path) means that industry standard formats such as XML IIOP are not appropriate.

The data transmission relies upon primitive data types provided by the Java language. These types have architecture independent size, and big endian byte ordering is used throughout. These types are set out in table 1 below.

Type	Size	Description	ID
Boolean	1 byte	0 = false 1 = true	-1

byte	8 bit signed two's complement	-128 to 127	-2
char	16 bit unsigned integer	Unicode code	-3
short	16 bit signed two's complement integer	-32768 to 32767	-4
int	32 bit signed two's complement integer	-2147483648 to 2147473647	-5
long	64 bit signed two's complement integer	Large range	-6
float	32 bit IEEE 754 standard single precision	About 7 decimal places accuracy	-7
double	64 bit IEEE 754 standard double precision	About 15 places accuracy	-8

Table 1: Primitive data types

Data packets transmitted from the broadcast server to a home receiver are considered to make up a stream of records. Each record has a structure as illustrated in Table 2 below:

Element Name	Type
IDH	byte
ID	Any
LNH	byte
LN (optional)	Any
DATA	Any.

TABLE 2: Record Structure

All records contain a header comprising the IDH, ID, and LNH fields, and optionally the LN field, shown above. The ID field defines the type of the record. The LN field defines the length of all data contained within the record. IDH acts as a header for the ID and LNH acts as a header for the length field.

IDH is a single byte and defines either the data type of the ID if it is negative (according to the ID column of table 1) or the number of bytes contained within the header if it is positive. This allows an ID to contain a string of up to 128 bytes, or alternatively simply a numeric value. The most common and efficient value for the IDH byte is –2 indicating that ID is a single byte.

The ID itself is application specific and will typically take the form of a unique identifier for the data packet. Uniqueness of identifiers is preferred as this simplifies parser logic.

The length header, LNH, defines the size of the record element containing data defining the length of the record. The LNH element is a single byte. A positive LNH value denotes that that the DATA part of the record is a primitive type. The primitive type is generated by negating the LNH value (e.g. if LNH is "2", the Data is of type "-2" which is a byte).If LNH is positive in this way, there will be no LN element.

If LNH contains a negative value, the primitive type denoted by that value is the type of the succeeding LN element.

Data packets transmitted in the form of records as described above are received by home receivers and are converted first into packets of the form illustrated in figure 17 and subsequently into objects as described above. The home receiver will now be described with reference to figure 23, where the receiver segment 60 is illustrated.

The receiver segment comprises a recorder section 74, an event manager section 75 and a home viewer suite section 76.

Operation of the home viewer suite section 76 will now be described in further detail. This section is responsible for all interfacing between a user viewing broadcasts at home and the system of the present invention. A number of features are provided to the user.

Each user may have their own profile within the home viewer suite, so that the receiver can be configured to respond to particular event types as described above. As described above, a user may rate their preferences such that a particular rating is required to activate the receiver. Additionally, a user may allocate priorities to particular events such that events having a higher priority are recorded in preference to those having a lower priority. Recording can occur as a background operation while a user continues to watch a broadcast television programme. That is, while broadcast continues, recording may start and stop in accordance with a user's profile without input from the user. The system additionally provides an electronic programme guide providing details of scheduled distributed programmes.

When playing back recorded material, a user may group a number of recorded programmes such that only events matching predetermined criteria are shown. This facility allows only highlights of recorded programmes to be shown. A user can delete

predetermined events from a recorded programme, and collect similar events into a group. The system therefore allows complete management of recorded programmes in terms of their constituent events.

When one or more events recorded by the home receiver have been viewed, if the user does not explicitly save the events, their ID is added to a holder Bin. Each item in the holder bin has a countdown time (which may typically run for several days or weeks). When the countdown timer reaches zero, events are deleted so as to preserve space on a disc on which events are stored.

The home viewer suite section 76 comprises five components: a player 77, an electronic programme guide (EPG) component 78, a live TV component 79, an event configuration or events profile component 80 and a preferences component 81. These components cooperate to form a suite 82. The suite 82 is the interface between a home user and the entire system. Aecordingly, the suite 82 is provided with an easy to use interface such as a graphical user interface (GUI). The operation of each of these components will now be described.

The player 77 allows a user to view previously recorded events. The player includes a menu comprising a number of options which are displayed to the user. The user can select a Replay button to begin playback and is presented with further opportunity to select whether all recordings or only unviewed recordings should be played back.

Furthermore the user can use the menu to display a list of scheduled programmes or events that have been recorded. Making a selection from this list will load a stored scheduled programme or sequence of events into an internal player memory. If a programme is selected, its constituent events are loaded into the memory in the order in which they occur in the programme. If an event type is selected, events matching that type are loaded into the internal memory as a sequence of events.

The user can then view the events loaded into the internal memory. The player component provides software which allows the user to skip to particular events, move to the next event and playback in various ways. It will be appreciated that standard functionality as provided by a video cassette recorder may be conveniently incorporated into the player software.

The user has the option of deleting events from a sequence or of saving a sequence of events as stored in the internal player memory. IDs of programmes or events which have been viewed are automatically added to a holder bin as described above. Any programmes or events which are specifically selected for saving are not added to the holder bin.

The EPG component 78 can be selected using a user interface provided by the home viewer suite 82. This component displays a window showing an electronic programme guide which may be viewed and navigated by the user.

Selecting the Live TV component 79 from the user interface of the suite 82 displays a live broadcast which may be used to view live television.

The event configuration or profile component 80 allows a user to configure their profile. This component allows users to specify event types which they wish to record. This information is then stored in an event profile database 83 which form part of the recorder section 74. Data is read from this database 83 and compared with broadcast programme and event types. Information about priority and rating levels is also configured using the event configuration component 80.

The preferences component 81 enables a viewer to configure various system parameters. For example holder bin time out, and specification of an order in which programmes should be deleted from the programme data store.

The recorder section 74 is responsible for recording programmes and events in accordance with a user profile. The section allows auto selection of what to record, utilising priority and ratings information, together with event type information to ensure that recorded programmes and events best match a user's profile.

The recorder section includes a buffer 84, and an events spool file 85 to enable buffering of incoming objects as described above. Additionally, in some embodiments of the present invention a user may specify specific distributed programme types which are of interest and these are stored in a schedule profile 86. It should be noted that in the example described above, the schedule profile and event profile will be a common entity, given that distributed programmes are in themselves relatively high level events.

The recorder component is controlled by a recorder module 87 which is coupled to a decoder 88 for receiving broadcast signals. The decoder 88 may conveniently be supplied by Happauge™ software.

The recorder module 87 monitors all incoming broadcasts received by the decoder 88. The decoder 88 reconstructs data packets of the form shown in figure 17 from the received data, and these packets are used to create objects which are written to the events spool file 85. The recorder module 87 reads and processes objects from the event spool file 85 as described above.

In addition to event based recording as described above, the user's profile may contain a start time for a programme that is to be recorded. In this case, the recorder commences recording at that time irrespective of the packets received. Thus a system in accordance with the present invention may also incorporate conventional recording technology.

The final section of the receiver segment is the event manager section 75. This comprises a clips database 89 and an events database 90 together with an event manager component 91 and a clips archive 92. The event manager section 75 is responsible for maintaining clips (i.e. televisual images related to events) and event objects.

The event manager maintains associations between clips and their events. Any component wishing to access clip or event data sends a request to the event manager component 91 whereupon this component interrogates the databases 89, 90 to obtain the necessary information.

The auto deletion performed by a holder bin as described above is also managed by this section. A timer associated with every item in the holder bin is monitored by the event manager component 91. When an event's countdown clock reaches zero the event is deleted from the archive together with any associated entries in the clips database 89 or the events database 90.

The event manager component 91 monitors storage space and if it is calculated that available space is not sufficient to maintain recording quality, recording quality is reduced so as to ensure that the programme can be recorded in the available space. If this method does not result in obtaining sufficient space for recording of the necessary events, stored events having low priority are deleted. This process begins with the event of lowest priority and continues until sufficient space is found. The number of events that can be deleted in this way is configurable by the user. If there is still insufficient space, recording with not take place and a message to this effect is displayed to the user. The user may then manually delete stored clips and events so as to obtain enough free space.

The broadcast segment described above contains a broadcast server which is central to the system. Implementation of the broadcast server in terms of its constituent

classes, and its communications interfaces will now be described. The broadcast server is an application software service providing an interface of functions to the classification system described above, whereby transmission of events may be effected. The broadcast server can either be operated on the same physical server as the classification process or is preferably housed on a separate server box linked by a computer network. This allows a number of classification workstations to access a shared broadcast server.

Referring to figure 24, a broadcast server 93 is shown in communication with a number of classification clients 94. Each of these classification clients executes program code to implement a software application as described above. These classification clients collectively form the classifier 67 described above. A number of online (or live) classifiers 95 and a number of offline classifiers 96 are all controlled by a classification controller 97. These clients use an interface 98 provided by the broadcast server 98 using Remote Method Invocation (RMI), which allows comprehensive communication between the classification clients 99 and the broadcast server 98 which broadcasts events. The interface 98 is provided by one or more Java classes. Communication between the classification clients 94 and the broadcast server 93 uses EventBase objects, and other objects derived from the EventBase class. EventBase objects representing events are created by the classifiers as described above. These objects are passed to the broadcast server 93 by means of the interface 98. Each time an object is updated, a partial EventBase object is passed to the broadcast server by means of the interface 98 containing the sequence number of the object, and the updated data. When an object is received by the broadcast server action is taken to create and broadcast suitable data packets of the form illustrated in figures 17. All data supplied in the object passed to the broadcast server 98 is copied to an appropriate data packet and broadcast to home receivers.

The Java classes provided by the broadcast server to form the interface 98 expose the following methods:

```
SendEvent(EventBase);                                    (1)
```

This method passes a single EventBase object to the broadcast server. On receiving an event, the broadcast server passes the objects to its communications modules for creation and broadcast of suitable data packets.

```
SendEvents(EventBase[]);                                 (2)
```

This method passes an array of EventBase objects to the broadcast server. Passing a plurality of EventBase objects is particularly important where a new event signals the end of one or more earlier events. Each event passed in this way will generate a data packet suitable for broadcast to home receivers.

```
GetNextSequence();                                       (3)
```

This method returns the next available event sequence number. All classification clients use this method to obtain unique identifiers for their events. Each identifier is only ever issued once. If a particular identifier is lost or not used by a classification client for any reason there will be a gap in the sequence of identifiers. This ensures that each identifier is unique.

Each offline classification client 96 writes event lists to a file in Extensible Markup Language (XML) format. This file will contain event timings relative to a start time of the programme being classified. Broadcasting complete event files including relative timings creates excessive complication for receivers, as commercial breaks and transmission delays must be taken into account. Therefore, an event list with relative timings is stored by the broadcast server 93 and transmitted live in time with the programme. Conversion from relative to absolute time is performed by the broadcast server.

The classification controller 97 oversees all event broadcasts. An operator of the classification controller is responsible for transmission of pre-recorded event information This process is also known as "despoiling". The operator may additionally have control over live event transmission. The despooling process is controlled by the classification controller using a despooler 99 provided by the broadcast server 93. The classification controller 97 and despooler 99 communicate using methods exposed by the despooler by means of RMI. The actions performed include selection of a programme to be broadcast from a database and indication of when various packets indicating programme start are to be broadcast. The classification controller operator also controls pause and resume of the event list, typically for commercial breaks.

The despooler 99 reads events from an XML file containing EventBase objects. The despooler is provided as a software service and more than one instance of the despooler class may exist at one time to allow multiple programmes to be broadcast concurrently. The despooler reads relative timed events from the XML file and converts these times into absolute start and stop times. Events having absolute timings are then passed to the communications module. Events passed to the communications module in this way resemble events generated in real time thus offline and online classification can be handled in the same way thereafter. Therefore, receivers always receive events with absolute times.

The first event in the XML file will have a relative start time of 0. This may not be the start of the video clip, and a clip start offset field provides a convenient way of replaying events in synchronisation with the video clip for editing purposes. This feature is required as preamble present in the clip (e.g. technical information) will not be transmitted to receivers. The clip start offset field is not used by the despooler. The despooler will begin reading and transmitting events at the start of the programme. It should be noted that the programme start event is sent directly from the classifier and does not pass through the despooler.

The despooler exposes a number of methods to allow the interaction with the classification controller 97 as described above. This is presented by means of a Java interface which a class within the despooler implements to provide functionality.

```
public interface DeSpooler
{
        static DeSpooler createDeSpooler(EventList L);
        play();
        pause();                                                    (4)
        resume();
        destroy();
}
```

The methods provided by the interface shown above have the following functionality:

createDeSpooler() is a constructor function. It takes a pointer L which points to a file containing EventBase objects, and creates a despooler for that file.

play() synchronises the EventList offset to the current time and starts despooler's processing of the EventList.

pause() pauses the despooler.

resume() resumes despooling of an EventList file. This function adjusts the time offset by the time elapsed between calls to pause() and resume() to ensure that the event list and broadcast remain in synchronisation.

destroy() unloads the event list and terminates the despooler. When the end of an EventList file is reached the despooling stops automatically, without a call to destroy() being necessary.

The classification client therefore constructs a DeSpooler instance and uses methods provided therein to control the created object. The DeSpooler instance and its methods therefore implement the controller as described above.

The broadcast server 93 includes an operator server 100. This communicates with a database 101. The database 101 may be accessed by the classification clients 94 using the operator server 100 to allow operators to log into the system. Operators will log into a classification client. An administrator may use the operator server to allocate permissions to suitably qualified people so as to allow classification of various programmes.

The database 101 of the operator server 100 is a standard relational database. It contains programme and content information; event lists; operator details and schedule information.

All programme content will have entries in the programme or content tables of the operator database. Using these tables an classification client may obtain a Programme Identifier needed for ProgrammeStart Event transmission.

Administrative tools 102 are provided for maintenance of the operator server 100 and associated database 101. EventLists created for pre-recorded content are referenced from content tables. Schedule information stored in the operator server may be imported from an external source if appropriate.

Events transmitted to the broadcast server 93 using Java RMI in the form of EventBase objects must be broadcast to home users. This communication is managed

by a VBI communication module 103. The VBI communication module is in communication with a datacast service 104 which transmits event data to home users having receivers 105.

Various information is transmitted to home receivers in addition to the event information described above. For example, icons to represent various events and schedule information is also transmitted from the broadcast serve to home receivers. Conveniently, this can be achieved by sending data at times of low usage, such as in the early hours of the morning.

Having described the architecture of a system suitable for the implementation of the present invention, an interface suitable for the home receiver is now described.

A first part of the user interface allows a user to define events which are of interest from a number of search/browse screens. Only programmes in the current EPG will be accessible, and selections made from these screens will have no direct impact on a profile defined for Event recording. This mechanism is similar to that found on conventional Personal Video Recorders (PVRs). However, broadcast Event data will be used to trigger recording of the programme. This means precise start and stop times will be used – even if a programme overruns or is re-scheduled, in contrast to the mechanisms provided by many conventional PVRs. An EPG will be broadcast regularly, according to bandwidth availability. The programme database will contain schedule information, and programme descriptions, taken from these EPG broadcasts, for at least two weeks.

A main menu presented to a user will provide an option titled "*Schedule Recordings*". This will allow access to the scheduled programme set-up. From here the user will be able to search for specific programmes by genre, name, scheduled date/time or channel.

The user filters or searches for programmes and is presented with a listing. This will contain summary details of the programme (title, time, and a selected flag). This listing further includes UP and DOWN buttons to allow the user to navigate this list. A RIGHT button selects a particular entry and a detail screen is then displayed for the selected item. This detail screen will contain all EPG information for this programme, (and may include links to other programmes). From this screen the user may choose to "Record this programme", or "Record all episodes of this programme".

The user may modify the priority of a schedule entry. A default priority for all scheduled programmes will be 5. This high value cannot be overridden by an Event profile entry. However, the user may choose to lower this value so that Event recordings may be triggered in the event of a programme clash.

The user may choose to modify the recording quality of this programme. The default value will be set as part of the "system set-up". However, the user may choose to override this default value.

An ENTER button will toggle the "selected flag" for a selected programme, determining whether a programme is scheduled for recording.

A user may choose to filter (or sort) any programme listing by category. If the EPG format allows, these categories are linked to high-level Event categories used for profile programming. When a category filter is displayed for the first time it will default to including all categories a user has in their Event Profile. Subsequently, values set by the user will be used.

A user may also find a programme with a specific name. A text input control will allow the user to input part of a programme title and the resulting matches will be displayed in a pick list as described above.

Furthermore, a user may obtain a listing of programmes on a certain day. A category selection screen will be displayed as described above. The current day's schedule will be displayed. The user may change days using PGUP/PGDN, this will simply show a pick list described above for that day.

A further conventional recording mechanism is provided whereby a user may choose to schedule a recording manually. The User Interface will require entry of time, date, and channel (with suitable defaults). Additionally, a repeat option will be supported for daily, weekly, or days of week (e.g. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday).

The above description relates to the recording of complete programmes based upon broadcast distributed programme information. In addition however, the present invention enables the recording of individual events, in accordance with a user's preferences. This procedure will now be described.

The user is able to define a profile of Event categories that are of interest from a hierarchy of available categories. This will allow the specification of events down to a very fine level if required, although it is likely that initial use will be of very broad classifications. This can conveniently be provided by allowing a user to traverse a hierarchy of categories which corresponds to that used by the classifier.

An updateable classification hierarchy is held in each receiver. This must match that held on the Classification server, although it need not be precisely the same structure. Implementation is such that the event hierarchy may be changed in response to market demands.

Additionally, the profile set up interface may provide a "wizard" style interface such that a user can specify for example "I want to watch all tennis matches featuring Tim Henman". Program code executed by the home receiver can take this statement and

create a number of tuples as described above to determine which events should be recorded or viewed by the user.

The interface will also cater for more complex enquiries such as "I want to see only news items about tea plantations in India or coffee in Colombia", by generating a suitable set of tuples which specify a more restricted set of event types.

A Subject Profile provides a simplified mechanism for expressing an interest in one or more Event classes using only a minimum of keystrokes. A subject profile selection screen will typically contain only part of a classification hierarchy, together with program code capable of mapping the profile to the hierarchy used by the classifier. The use of wildcards (e.g. "sport.soccer.*") will improve profile size Here the "*" character is used to represent any value such that anything having a parent soccer and a grandparent sport will be found. Profiles are downloadable from a remote server. For example, a user may download a "Soccer lover's" profile and make any amendments necessary. This can significantly simplify and speed up the profile set up procedure.

In all of the circumstances described above, the profile is preferably specified using a hierarchical system, such that selections can be made at different levels of a hierarchy. For example a user may click "sport", (using the "ENTER" button) and all sub-categories of sport will automatically be selected – this will result in a "bold" tick against the "sport" category. However, the user may then choose to descend the sport category (using the "RIGHT" button), and de-select individual sub-categories. If one or more items in a sub category are selected, then the parent category will show a "faint tick". If all items in a sub category are selected, the parent category will show a "bold tick" When a user descends a level, as many of the parent levels as possible will still be displayed to provide context. Parent categories will always be distinguishable from sub categories. The user interface as described in similar to that used in many installation programmes for Windows® applications (such as Microsoft™ Office).

A beginners screen provides rapid access to "common" profiles. This both aids the user, and allows "market driven" profiles to be emphasised. This screen is driven entirely by a downloadable XML file which specifies the menu hierarchy. This screen will normally only contain one or two levels, so as to ensure that simplicity is not compromised.

Each menu item may link directly to a subject profile, or contain child menu items. The placing and relationships of these items is completely arbitrary, being specified by the XML file. This allows this screen to be driven by market, genre or any other relationship.

The beginners screen will allow the user only to select/deselect subject profiles. He may also set a priority level for each profile as illustrated in table 3 below:

My Preferences	**Priority**	Selected
Arsenal Soccer Matches	4	√
Other Soccer	3	√
National News		
Eastenders	2	√
Other soaps		

Table 3: Options presented on "beginners screen"

It can be seen from the "selected column" of table 3 that the user has an interest in Soccer Matches involving the team Arsenal, Other Soccer and a soap opera entitled "Eastenders" (Eastenders is a proprietary trademark of the British Broadcasting Corporation). Furthermore, the priority column shows that Arsenal Matches are of highest priority with Other Soccer and Eastenders having lower priorities

Selecting the "other soccer" entry in the beginners screen allows specification at a lower lever, as illustrated in table 4:

Other Soccer	Priority	Selected
Chelsea Soccer Matches	3	√
All Premier League Soccer Matches		
Best goals and saves	2	√

Table 4: Options presented by descending "Other Soccer" in Table 3.

Here it can be seen that the user has no interest in "All premier League" but does have an interest in "Chelsea Soccer Matches" (soccer matches involving the team Chelsea) which has higher priority than "Best goals and Saves".

It has been mentioned above that the beginners screen is provided by an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file. An extract from an XML file equating to part of the example of tables 3 and 4 is shown in appendix 3.

Two `<item>` tags exist at the top level, defining the items Arsenal Soccer Matches and Other Soccer. The item Arsenal simply defines the category of the item as `sports.soccer.*`, and sets the parameter `"team"` to a value of `"Arsenal"`. The item is ended with a `</item>` tag. The Item `"Other Soccer"` contains three sub items (indented in a conventional way in the above code fragment). Each of these items comprises attributes having similar forms to those described for Arsenal Soccer Matches. It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the attributes specified for each item may be varied in accordance with flexibility provided by the XML format.

The category attributes of the XML file of appendix 3 provide a link between the hierarchy used by the classifier to perform classification, and the higher level

description of the beginners screen. The home receiver is able to generate a profile containing categories which equate to the selections made in the beginners screen.

An advanced screen allows the user to navigate the entire category hierarchy, and allows more control over selection of individual classes, priorities, ratings and attributes.

The user is provided with the same navigation methods as described above. However, he may provide additional filters to fine tune the profile, and has access to many more Event classes.

Referring now to figure 25, there is illustrated a graphical user interface for the advanced selection window. The top window of figure 25 shows a top level event classifications for movies comprising categories (shown as topics) such as action, adventure, cartoon, comedy and sci-fi. Each topic has an icon which is used throughout the receiver system to allow easy identification of the various topics. The window further comprises "record", "notify me", "rating", "priority" and "attribute". A "tick" in the "record" column, orders the system to capture the Event to disk, whilst a tick in the "Notify" column merely warns the user the Event is starting. The rating column contains a value comprising a number of stars. Each broadcast event has a rating, and only events having a rating equal to or greater than that in the rating column will be notified or recorded. The priority column defines the action when Events clash. Those with the highest priority will always be recorded in preference to lower priorities. In the case of two events with the same priority then the first to be broadcast is recorded. The Attribute column allows the user to define various "search filters".

The lower window of figure 25 shows the sub-categories of the "Sci-Fi" topic. This window has the same structure as that defined above. It should be noted the rating values for topics within "Sci-fi" differ from 0-star to 2-star. Accordingly, the rating

column for the sci-fi entry in the upper window contains a continuous line to indicate that sub topics have different rating values.

A summary of the current recording schedule may be viewed, and this is available from the main menu of the receiver system. This summary will display scheduled programmes, and should indicate what will be recorded automatically. This will be achieved by simply comparing the user's profile with the categories of scheduled events to determine what will be recorded. This mechanism will also indicate definite clashes (i.e. more than one scheduled programme at the same time), and also indicate possible clashes.

Having described the mechanism and interface by which a recording profile may be created, the recording process will now be described.

The use of buffering techniques to minimize the effect of event transmission latency has been described above. Features of this buffer, are now described in further detail. There are several causes of latency of event data ranging from classification operator reaction time, to temporary communications faults (e.g. electrical interference causing VBI packet loss). Any live broadcast will suffer from some lag (an event packet cannot be broadcast until the event has occurred – which is too late for recording to begin at the start of the event).

A local buffer will ensure that the start of events are rarely missed, by time shifting the recording by a few seconds. Events may therefore appear to a viewer a short time after they occur, but the contents of the buffer will ensure that any lead in to the event, and the event itself, is not missed.

Buffering will begin under a number of conditions:

1. Receipt of a PENP as described above.
1. EPG indication that a programme that is relevant to the user's profile.

2. An EventBase Object that may be relevant to the user's profile has been delivered.

If the system is already recording (or buffering) then no action is taken. Buffering is stopped when an event on the channel being buffered is received that indicates the chances of a future event match is low (e.g. a Programme event end packet).

The classification server will send out PENPs before the start of programmes. This will be based on a schedule and/or operator intervention. The PENP event will contain as much information about the upcoming event (usually a ProgrammeEvent) as possible. The recorder will pass the PENP through Event Matching logic (described below). If this logic indicates a match then the recorder will tune to the channel indicated and start capturing to a temporary storage area. This will be the usual method for commencing buffering.

Buffering can also be initiated by the EPG. Here, the recorder will scan the upcoming scheduled programmes. If any of these are in categories contained in the user profile then buffering of the relevant channel is started.

EventBase object initiated buffering provides a safety net for recording difficult to predict events. For example, the recorder may detect a sports event within a news programme, and decide to buffer if the user's profile contains any events in a sports category.

A user's profile is matched against incoming objects and detection of record or view requests is made. Even if capture has been requested, this does not guarantee recording of the event. If there is currently no capture in progress then the request is granted. If capture is ongoing and on the same channel as requested then the matcher should simply return "granted" as the stream is already being captured. This caters for the common case of nested events. However, if an ongoing event is being recorded on

another channel then the system must check the relative priority levels for the event being recorded, and the level for the event that requested capture. If the level of the ongoing event is greater than or equal to the event requesting capture then capture is denied. Otherwise capture is granted.

If a match is found, capture takes place. Programme content will be captured to disk in the Moving Picture Experts Group-2 (MPEG-2) format. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that other data formats are equally applicable for data storage. Any event data is stored along with the content. The event data may later be searched for content of interest.

Event recording relies on two input channels. A first for event data sent from a classification server, and a second for programme content. The software expects event data to be broadcast using the VBI protocol and makes use of the Hauppauge PVR card for video capture and compression. Other devices may be used and both an abstract communications layer, and abstract multimedia layer are provided to increase flexibility.

The recording process can be described conceptually by three modules (although it will be appreciated that an implementation may not require three distinct modules): An event marshaller, a queue de-spooler, and a scheduler.

The scheduler is responsible for managing scheduled recordings. Received start packets will be placed into a temporary spool area by the event marshaller. Packets in this area will be sorted by start time of the event. Event data will generally never be broadcast more than a few seconds before the start time of the event, so this spool is considered transient.

Update and stop packets will be discarded immediately if a start packet with the corresponding ID does not exists either in the spool, or the Event Database. Update packets will "migrate" toward their start packet (either in the spool or the database).

Stop events are treated similarly (in which case the recording must be scheduled to stop), or the packet may be placed into the spool (sorted by actual stop time), and left for the de-spooler to process it (as described below). The marshaller may filter certain ControlEvents that are not time based.

While the current time is equal or greater than the oldest queued event the de-spooler will remove the oldest event packet from the queue.

A packet may be just a start packet, just a stop packet or could contain a full set of event data – this will depend on timing and implementation.

A start (or full) packet will be passed to the Event Matcher, and if a match is found, content from the buffer recorded at the time of the event start will be stored. If the buffer process is not active it must first be started, and content will be stored from the current time. If the matching logic indicates that capture was requested but not granted this event is not discarded. Instead the start time is updated to the near future, and the event is placed back in the queue. If this new start time equals or exceeds the end time of the event then the entire event will be discarded. This ensures that a short high priority recording will still allow the bulk of a longer low priority recording to take place.

If the event fails to match it will be discarded. A stop packet will first update the Event Database, then if there are no other open events capturing on this channel, capture will stop. The Clip Database will be updated with the new content.

The software is written so as to be as independent of the underlying platform as possible. The design takes into account the future incorporation of this product to PVRs. The receiver client will run on a high end PC. Tens of gigabytes of disc space will be required (one hour of recorded video equates to some 900Mb of storage). A

TV tuner and capture card are fitted to the PC. The Hauppauge PVR card is a suitable example.

The software is operable on any platform having a compatible video capture card and providing support for Java Standard Edition Version 2.

Software is also provided at each receiver to play back captured video. The Player software comprises two components –a Selector and a Player.

When a user chooses to view recordings, the Selector component is used to select the program/event to be viewed, whilst the Player loads the selected events. These components are described in further detail below.

In order for a user to play a video clip, the event(s) must be accessed using the Selector component. The user first selects a Recording Type from a menu comprising three options:

1. Unseen Recordings
2. Seen Recordings
3. All Recordings

Having chosen one of these three options, a further menu is displayed having two options:

1. Programmes
2. Events

If Programs is selected from the second menu, a window is displayed that presents to the user all recorded distributed programmes which comply with the criteria selected from the first menu option. If the user selects Events, then a window is displayed showing all recorded Events. Again this list is filtered in accordance with the first menu choice.

Referring now to figure 26, a Programme Selector Window is illustrated. This window displays the scheduled programs recorded by the Recorder. If a programme has several recordings (e.g.: a weekly series), then an entry exists in the list for each individual recording. Each entry contains a programme title, a date and time at which recording took place and a flag to provide an indication to the user of whether the whole programme was recorded or not. The user may sort the list by either Programme Title or the Date/Time at which it was recorded.

An Event Selector Window is illustrated in figure 27. This window displays the individual Events recorded by the Recorder. Multiple events having the same event type (e.g.: soccer goals), appear only once in the window, and an amount column is provided to indicate a number of occurrences of a particular event. A further column is provided to indicate how many different programmes have contributed to this total number of occurrences of a particular event.

When either the Program Selector window or the Event Selector Window is displayed, the user may select an entry whereupon a Player component is loaded. If a programme is selected, the sequence of events for that programme are delivered to the Player. If an Event Type is selected, the event type's related events are loaded and displayed as a sequence of events in the Player.

Once a selection has been made in the Selector window, that window is closed and the Player is loaded with the appropriate events. The Player consists of two main windows, which are illustrated in outline in figure 7 and have been described above. The use of two windows, one for a video clip and a second for controls allows program code relating to the controls to be isolated from the video-displaying code, thereby enabling easier code maintenance.

Figure 28 shows the windows of figure 9 in greater detail. The Controller Bar window 106 is positioned below the Video Window 107. The Controller Bar may also be docked at the top of the Video Window 107 or in a floating state. When the Video Display is set to full-screen mode, the user has the option of hiding the Controller Bar so as not to obstruct the video.

The Controller Bar 106 comprises two sections, a Navigation bar 108 and an Event Bar 109. The Event Bar 109 consists of a row of events depicting the event classification for the video-display as was described with reference to figure 7, 8 and 9 above.

The event that is currently being played is shown with a highlighted border in the event bar 109. The user may play any event by selecting it with a single click. This highlights the border of the selected event icon, and the video clip will play that event.

Single-clicking on a highlighted event whilst its currently playing will cause the video clip to pause. A single-click will once again continue to play, creating a play/pause toggle with single-click actions.

The top-most level of events is shown by default in the Event Bar, as illustrated in figure 28. Events that are parents to a sequence of sub-events are recognized with a parent indicator icon to lower-right corner of the event icon. Event 3.4 contains such a parent indicator icon 110.

Double-clicking on a parent event (displaying the icon 110) will expand it to display its sub-events. When this is done, the following sequence of actions occurs

1. The current event bar 109 is cleared
2. The selected parent event is positioned to the far-left and coloured so as to indicate that it is a parent.

3. The event bar 109 is populated with the parent event's sub-events.

Moreover, any sub-events that can be further expanded are displayed with a parent indicator icon 110. Double-clicking on an expandable event drills down the event order. The user can traverse back up the order by double clicking on the coloured parent event on the far left.

Making an appropriate selection on an event (e.g. a right mouse button click) opens up the Event Context-Sensitive Window, displaying information and controls about that event. The window is presented to the user, showing the following information and options for the highlighted event:

1. View Properties
2. Ability to access the associated Action
3. Play the event
4. Expand the Event to view its sub-events
5. Delete the Event
6. Archive the Event
7. Keep the Event indefinitely
8. Perform an instant Replay

The navigation bar 108 comprises controls similar to those found on a conventional VCR that is play, fastforward, rewind and pause functionality is provided by buttons denoted by conventional icons.

The play button, in contrast to the Event-Play feature, plays through all events as a continuous stream. That is, it does not stop at the end of an event, only at the end of the video clip. The pause button acts as a conventional pause button – click once to pause, click again to resume. The fast forward button provides conventional

functionality. Additionally clicking this button multiple times changes the speed at which it plays back:

- 1 click: plays at 2 times the speed
- 2 click: plays at 5 times the speed
- 3 click: plays at 10 times the speed

Further clicks will simply recycle the action back to that of the first click. To return the video clip speed to normal, the user must click on the play button.

The rewind button provides conventional functionality, with speed variance being provided in the same way as the fast forward button.

The navigation bar 108 comprises three further buttons. A slow advance button 111 causes the video clip to advance frame-by-frame at a slow speed, and an event restart button 112 causes the video clip to rewind to the beginning of the current event. An instant replay button 113 allows the user to replay a few seconds of the video clip. If the Event Bar is visible, then the instant-replay button 113 will not effect rewind beyond the beginning of the current event.

Making an appropriate selection in the video clip window 107 (e.g. a right mouse button click) opens up the Global Context-Sensitive Window, displaying information and controls about the video clip. The window presented to the user, contains the following options:

- Ability to Show/Hide the Event Bar
- Ability to Show/Hide the Navigation Control Bar
- Ability to switch between windowed mode and full-screen mode
- Ability to Show/Hide the Properties of the Program

Referring back to the Wimbledon programme example described above with reference to figures 14 to 17, Figure 29 shows a series of icons which could appear in the event bar 109 of figure 28. In the embodiment of figure 29, all events are shown in a line, regardless of their hierarchical position. The event bar may be controlled in the manner described with reference to figure 28.

In the embodiments of the home receiver described above, it has been assumed that the hardware provided is capable of executing Java program code. If a home receiver is used which cannot execute Java, it may be necessary to provide code in a lower level language such as C or assembler to handle and process received data. It is preferable in such a case that the lower level code be configured so as to allow Java objects to be manipulated in higher level parts of the home receiver.

As an alternative to the home receiver described above, the player/recorder functionality of the invention may be implemented in a set top box for use with a conventional television and VCR

One suitable form for this set top box will be a VCRController placed in line between a terrestrial TV antenna and a VCR. The VCRController will automatically detect and process start and stop packets as described above and cause the VCR to act accordingly. The packets used by the system are carried in the vertical blanking interval (VBI) of a terrestrial television transmission. The VCRController may replace the profile creation and management features described above by requiring a user to contact a call centre to establish a profile, whereupon the established profile is downloaded to the VCRController, each VCRController having a unique address to facilitate this download. It may be desirable to add password protection to the profile set up and amendment functionality so as to prevent malicious tampering with a user's profile. A simple implementation of the VCRController may be limited to the recording to complete programmes, while more sophisticated embodiments may include functionality to record individual events as described above.

In order to keep cost to a minimum, the VCR-controller may replace the interface described above with a sequence of Light emitting diodes (LEDs) indicating the status of the system. The VCR-controller may also comprise a Liquid Crystal Display (LCD). The system comprises two LEDs (or one two colour LED) which can be used to indicate status thus:

Slowly Blinking Red	- I have not been set up
Steady Red	- I have been set up but I have no profile
Steady Green	- I have a profile and I am ready
Rapidly Blinking Green	- I am downloading a profile
Slowly Blinking Green	- I have recorded something
Rapidly Blinking Red	- An error occurred receiving the profile

The VCRController has no means of obtaining feedback from the VCR. Therefore, in order to enable recording there must be a write enabled tape with sufficient recording capacity in the VCR, and the VCR must be in a known power state.

When first installed, the VCRController must be set-up to control the user's existing VCR. As part of the process it is desirable that some test is performed to give feedback that set-up has been successful. The VCRController must learn how to initiate recordings and select channels. Three possible ways of achieving this set up are now described.

First, an approach using embedded control codes. The device contains a 'magic library' of VCR control codes. Basic VCR function codes are known for practically all makes and models, as all will appear in the 'magic library'. To identify the VCR model the software tests a number of sequences and the user is asked to press OK when a predetermined operation (e.g. VCR is powered down) is successful.

This approach may require a number of cycles to complete, as it is difficult for the user to 'hint' at the correct codes. This approach can never be taught the user's channel selection arrangement – the assumption must always be that the user must always have the VCR's channel selection set up in a certain way. For example the VCR must be programmed such that channel 1 is local BBC1, channel 2 BBC2, etc.. Most VCRs would normally be set up this way, but the user must change his VCR set-up if not so.

A second approach is a "learning" style approach. Here, the VCRController is configured by learning from the user's normal VCR handset. This requires additional hardware in the form of an IR receiver in the VCRController, causing extra cost.

The user presses a button to begin the learning process, then follows a predefined sequence of commands (button presses) on the remote control. The approach should be simple for the user and also means that channel selection can be automatically determined and accommodated.

A third approach involves a customer contacting a call centre. On purchasing the device the user contacts the call centre to register it. At this time he describes the VCR make and model and possibly also the channel configuration details, if these are non-standard. A library of VCR Control codes is available at the call centre. The VCR model information, or more likely the specific control codes, are then downloaded to the user's device from the call centre library using the VBI. While this option involves no additional hardware, cost is incurred in call-centre support time.

The selection of one of these three options will influence the user interface for the VCRController. If the second option is chosen, the user interface can consist of two buttons and a two-coloured LED. The two buttons are marked TEST and OK. Pressing both together initiates LEARN mode. Pressing TEST causes the controller to re-output a sequence to make a short recording – if this is successful the user can

press OK to set the device into a ready state. The first Option has similar requirements. The user must put the device into learn mode, then indicate to it success (by pressing OK). The TEST button confirms successful set up as described above. The third option, involving a call centre only requires the Test facility.

The VCRController is equipped with two relay contact closure connections to control other devices. These are programmable to respond to certain event types received.

User Profiles are broadcast and targeted to an individual VCRController through the VCRController address. A complete profile is always downloaded at a time. On starting reception of a profile the device will set an LED flashing rapidly (green) and set it back to continuous (green) on successful reception of a complete profile. The device can indicate a problem receiving the protocol by changing the LED to blinking red. Complete profiles are always sent, such that an existing profile is replaced rather than updated. Thus the user's profile must be held on the central server system having broadcast capability. Downloaded profiles (and set-up information) must be stored in non-volatile memory, e.g. flash ROM in the VCRController. Device activation/deactivation information may also be downloaded to allow control for subscription purposes.

A detailed description of packet reception as implemented by the VCRController is now presented. It is necessary to verify the integrity of the data by a checksum and/or sequence number. Ultimately, corrupted data will always be rejected but packets may be missing and may arrive out of order. This means events or event updates can be missed, although every attempt is made to reduce the possibility. Event data for use with the VCRController comprises a number of header/data sets. The header defines the field ID, type and length. Not all fields will be sent in each packet. Fields of use to this device are now described.

The ID value is unique to an event. It is present in every packet, and is used to marshal incoming data packets to the appropriate event data. The time this event started (or will start) is held in the packet and it should be noted that a start time may be in the future or in the past. The time this event will stop is also included along with a TV channel on which the event is occurring This may require a further look-up to convert a transmitted ID to an internal channel ID of the VCR.

The data packet further comprises a category or class name, defining the type and category of the event. The VCRController is only be interested in events of class "Programme". These events have additional information which is matched against the user's profile. This information includes the unique Programme ID described above and a programme title.

The VCRController responds to Programme Start events, and matches to a user profile using transmitted Programme Title or Programme ID information. Programme names may include further 'encoding', For example, a soap opera entitled "Eastenders®" having several episodes each week may be encoded as follows:

Eastenders 1	(Monday's broadcast)
Eastenders 2	(Tuesday's broadcast)
Eastenders 1R	(Repeat of Monday's broadcast)
Eastenders 3	(Wednesday's broadcast)
Eastenders 4	(Sunday Omnibus broadcast)

The profile can specify which of these are to be recorded to eliminate duplication.
In order to allow for slow VCR start-up times, the classification system will also send out Imminent Programme Start events for use by the VCRController. These contain all the same information as a real programme start but are marked as provisional and sent out before the actual programme start. The VCRController also responds to Time Set information for synchronisation and User Profile information.

Packet decoding as carried out by the VCRController will now be described An incoming event packet will be decoded. Any necessary checksum or other verification will be carried out. If the packet is corrupt it will be discarded. Event data will need to be stored for the duration of the event (i.e. until the event has completed) since update packets may be sent. The first task will be to extract the ID. If an event packet with this ID has already been received then the data in the incoming packet will be used to update the existing event (this may be a new start time or stop time, but will not change the class name.) If the field type is not relevant it may be discarded. These fields are used in PC based implementations as have been described above. If a packet with this ID has not yet been received then the new packet will almost certainly contain a valid classname and start time. If this is not the case, it may be that the packet has been lost, and all attempts should be made to store this data for a short period in case the missing packet is re-transmitted. The classname field is inspected and the event discarded if not relevant.

The VCRController's main function is to stop and start the VCR as appropriate. Incoming Programme events are compared against the user's list of programmes and programme titles. If a match is made the event is added to a "to do" list. The start times of events on the "to do" list are checked against the current time. When the current time reaches or passes a predefined offset before the event start time, the channel is selected and recording started. The offset will be preset in the device to, say, 30 seconds to allow time for the slowest VCRs to start up.

Profile information contains priorities associated with various profile settings. These can be specified by the user for each event type of interest. This priority can be used to help arbitrate where conflicts of recording occur. A higher priority match occurring will be allowed to interrupt and take precedence over a lower priority recording. Where an equal priority conflict occurs, the recording which started first is allowed to continue to completion, then the second event is considered for recording.

In the embodiment of the present described above, it has been explained that each event is represented by a MapEvent Object, with a category variable being used to represent an event's type. In an alternative embodiment of the present invention, each event is represented by a unique class. Referring back to figure 15, it can be seen that the TriggerEvent Class has sub-classes of MapEvent (described above) and TV. TV in turn has a sub-class of Sport. The class Sport in turn has sub-classes including "Tennis" and the hierarchy continues with classes for each of the nodes shown in figures 12A and 12B (although these are not shown in figure 15). Thus each event shown in figures 12A and 12B has an associated class.

The class hierarchy of figure 15 makes appropriate use of object-oriented inheritance such that generic properties which are common to events represented by the MapEvent class or the specific class structure, such as start time, end time and sequence number are specified in the TriggerEvent class, while more specific variables are specified in classes positioned at lower levels of the hierarchy. In the case of the MapEvent class, a generic (attribute, value) array can be used to store event specific information. In the case of the specific class hierarchy derived from the TV class, event specific attributes can be held in instance variables of appropriate type provided in the respective classes. Again, inheritance can be used such that if a particular attribute is applicable to all events represented by sub-classes of the Sport class, a suitable variable can be specified in the Sport class, and inherited by all sub-classes.

Providing a specific hierarchy where specific events are represented by specific classes can make the logic applied by home receivers simpler, as it is the class of the object that needs to be checked, not an internal category attribute. Furthermore, bandwidth requirements are minimally reduced because there is no need to transmit a category attribute. It is also advantageous that event specific attributes are stored in predetermined variables instead of being stored in a generic array. This can simplify the procedure of attribute matching. For example, if a user is interested in viewing all

tennis matches featuring Tim Henman, use of a specific hierarchy in which a player array of two strings is specified in the tennis class can allow attribute matching using a specific instance of a Men's singles class M derived from the tennis class as follows:

```
for (i=0; i<2; i++)
     if(equals(M.player[i], "Tim Henman"))
          MATCH()
```

Where:

equals is the standard string equality function provided by the java.lang.String class, and

MATCH() is a function which is called to handle a match condition.

In contrast, where a generic array structure is used, it is necessary to traverse the entire attribute array until a pair beginning with the target player is found, whereupon a check can be made against the second element of the pair to determine whether or not a match exists. Typical code may be of the form:

```
for (i=0; i<n; i++)
     if(equals(M.attribute[i][0], "Player"))
          if (equals(M.attribute[i][1], "Tim Henman"))
               MATCH()
```

where:

equals and MATCH() are as described above, and *n* is the length of the attribute array.

This can be considerably more time consuming than using the specific hierarchy described above. This is because *n* will typically be relatively large, and the first *if* statement must be evaluated for every attribute.

It will be appreciated that in an implementation of the present invention, "Tim Henman" will not be hard coded into the program code, but will instead by represented by a suitable variable.

A disadvantage of using a specific hierarchy arises in the case where new event types are defined, and it is then necessary to create Java code to define the corresponding objects. Therefore, in many embodiments of the present invention it may be appropriate to use the generic properties of the MapEvent class for events for which no class is defined together with the specific hierarchy where suitable objects are defined.

When describing the XML DTD of appendix 1, it was mentioned that palettes could be static or dynamic, and that although dynamic was the default setting in the XML DTD, the Wimbledon programme example used a static palette. The dynamic palette is now described.

A dynamic palette is based upon the assumption that at any given time some event selections will be sensible and valid while some will be invalid. For example, in the Wimbledon programme described above, "Tennis" must be selected before selecting a particular action within a particular game. A dynamic palette displays only event buttons which can validly selected. An example of a dynamic palette suitable for use with the Wimbledon example presented above will now be described with reference to figures 30A to 30D.

Having decided that a tennis match is to be classified, four event buttons are shown in figure 30A representing tennis championships. One of these buttons must be selected

at the first stage of the classification, and no other events can be selected without first choosing a tennis championship event.

The Wimbledon event represented by an icon 114 is selected and is displayed in the history panel 33 as shown in figure 30B. The palette panel then changes to shown six icons representing different types of match event, as shown in figure 30B. One of these six icons must be selected at this stage of the classification. Selection of one of these events will result in a suitable icon being copied to the history panel 33 as shown in Figure 30C. Additionally the palette panel changes to display a series of Game buttons numbered 1 to 15 as displayed in figure 30C. One of these game buttons must be selected at this stage. Selection of the "Game 1" icon results in a suitable icon being copied to the history panel 33 and a series of action buttons appearing in the palette panel. This is shown in figure 30D. It should be noted that the game buttons are still displayed, as after an undetermined number of actions have been selected, game events can again be validly selected.

The dynamic palette panel illustrated in figures 30A to 30D can be generated automatically from the category information attached to each event. The dynamic panel ensures that events are classified in a sensible defined order, and minimises potential errors during classification, by only allowing a subset of events to be selected at any time.

The embodiments of the present invention described above assume an object oriented implementation using the Java programming language. It should be appreciated that although Java is currently the preferred implementation language, an object oriented implementation of the invention could be realised in any one of the number of widely available object oriented programming languages including C++. Furthermore, a conventional imperative programming language such as C could be used to implement a system in accordance with the present invention.

Although preferred embodiments of the present invention have been described in detail, it will be appreciated that other implementations are possible without departing from the spirit of the present invention, as set out in the appended claims.

APPENDIX 1

CLASSIFER PALETTE FILE
XML DTD

```
<!ELEMENT palette (panel+)>
<!ELEMENT panel (button*)>
<!ATTLIST panel
        name      CDATA     "Unknown"
        iconfile  CDATA     #IMPLIED
        mnemonic  CDATA     #IMPLIED
        type (dynamic|static) "dynamic"
>
<!ELEMENT tab EMPTY>
<!ATTLIST tab
        url  CDATA #REQUIRED
>
<!ELEMENT button (attribute*, tab*, button*)>
<!ATTLIST button
          name          CDATA     "Unknown event"
          classname     CDATA     #IMPLIED
          category      CDATA     #IMPLIED
          iconfile      CDATA     #REQUIRED
          mnemonic      CDATA     #IMPLIED
          defaultlevel CDATA      "1"
>
<!ELEMENT attribute EMPTY>
<!ATTLIST attribute
                name    CDATA     #REQUIRED
>
```

APPENDIX 2

CLASSIFER XML FILE

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<palette>
<panel name="tennis"
iconfile="res/colour_tennis/tennis.gif"
type="static">
      <button    name="general 1"
                 iconfile="res/colour_tennis/tennis.gif"
                 classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                 category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
      <button    name="general 2"
                 iconfile="res/colour_tennis/tennis2.gif"
                 classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                 category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
      <button    name="Volley"
                 iconfile="res/colour_tennis/volley.gif"
                 classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                 category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
      <button    name="Half Volley"
                 iconfile="res/colour_tennis/halfvolley.gif"
                 classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                 category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
      <button    name="Mixed Doubles"
                 iconfile="res/colour_tennis/mixeddoubles.gif"
                 classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                 category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
      <button    name="Women's Doubles"
                 iconfile="res/colour_tennis/womensdoubles.gif"
                 classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                 category="tv.sport.tennis.womensdoubles"/>
```

```
<button    name="Men's Doubles"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/mensdoubles.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="doubles"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/doubles.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="double fault 1"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/doublefault.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="fault_1"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/fault.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="ace"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/ace.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis.ace"/>
<button    name="return"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/return.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.return"/>
<button    name="net 1"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/net.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="forehand"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/forehand.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
```

```
<button    name="backhand"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/backhand.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="rally"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/rally.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="pass"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/pass.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="lob"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/lob.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="drop"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/drop.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="smash_1"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/smash.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="foot fault"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/footfault.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
<button    name="injury"
           iconfile="res/colour_tennis/injury.gif"
           classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
           category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
```

```
        <button    name="Serve"
                   iconfile="res/colour_tennis/serve.gif"
                   classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                   category="tv.sport.tennis.serve"/>
        <button    name="winner_2"
                   iconfile="res/colour_tennis/winner2.gif"
                   classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                   category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
        <button    name="smash_2"
                   iconfile="res/colour_tennis/smash2.gif"
                   classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                   category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
        <button    name="Wimbledon"
                   iconfile="res/colour_tennis/wimbledon.gif"
                   classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                   category="tv.sport.tennis.wimbledon"/>
        <button    name="US Open"
                   iconfile="res/colour_tennis/usopen.gif"
                   classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                   category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
        <button    name="French Open"
                   iconfile="res/colour_tennis/frenchopen.gif"
                   classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                   category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
        <button    name="Australian"
                   iconfile="res/colour_tennis/ozopen.gif"
                   classname="tv.edit.events.MapEvent"
                   category="tv.sport.tennis"/>
    </panel>
    </palette>
```

APPENDIX 3

HOME RECEIVER
BEGINNERS' PROFILE XML FILE

```
<item>
     Arsenal Soccer Matches
     <profile category="sports.soccer.*">
          <param name="team" value="Arsenal"/>
     </profile>
</item>
<item>
     Other Soccer
     <item>
          Chelsea Soccer Matches
          <profile category="sports.soccer.*">
               <param name="team" value="Chelsea"/>
          </profile>
     </item>
     <item>
          All premier league Soccer Matches
          <profile category="sports.soccer.*">
               <param name="league" value="1"/>
          </profile>
     </item>
     <item>
          Best goals and saves
          <profile category="sports.soccer.GoalEvent"
rating="5"/>
          <profile category="sports.soccer.Save" rating="5"/>
     </item>
</item>
```

CLAIMS

1. A method for generating a programme for presentation to a user such that the presented programme is made up from a sequence of programme elements each of which is a programme clip taken from at least one distributed programme and each of which represents an event, each programme element being classified on the basis of the event represented by the programme element, each programme element being stored with at least one associated programme element classification code, each classification code identifying a class to which the event represented by the associated programme element has been allocated, and a programme being assembled for presentation to the user by selecting at least one programme classification code and generating an assembled programme in the form of a sequence of programme elements associated with the at least one programme classification code, wherein programme elements are classified using a set of event classes including a plurality of subsets of the event classes, classification of each programme element comprises a classification operator making at least one selection from at least one of the subsets, said selection determining at least one of the subsets from which future selections can be made, and the at least one selection generating the classification code associated with the programme element.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of programme elements representing temporally adjacent events are classified by the classification operator, and classifications of temporally earlier events determine the at least one subset of event classes from which the classification operator may make selections.

3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the set of event classes contains classes having hierarchical relationships, and the subsets from which future selections can be made are determined by the hierarchical relationships.

4. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the at least one subset from which selections can be made is symbolically displayed to the classification operator.

5. An apparatus for carrying out the method of any preceding claim.

6. A computer program for carrying out the method of any one of claims 1 to 4.

7. A method substantially as hereinbefore described, with reference to the accompanying drawings.

8. An apparatus substantially as hereinbefore described, with reference to the accompanying drawings.

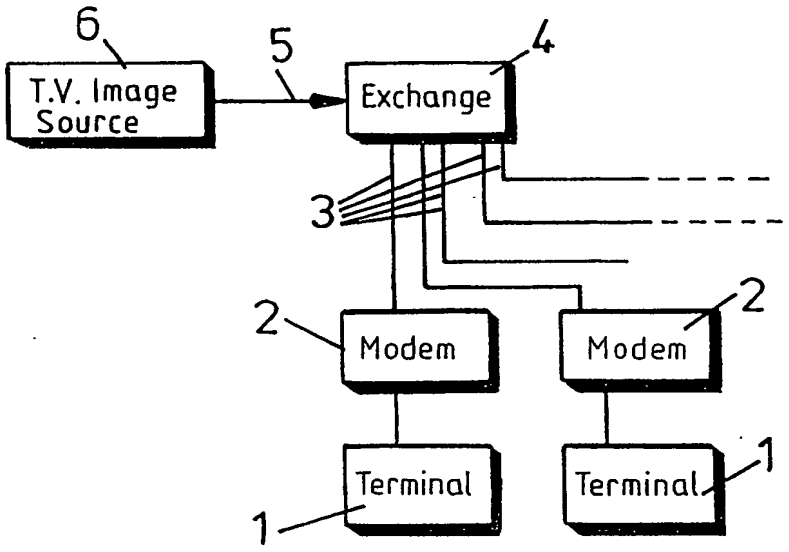

6
T.V. Image Source
5
Exchange
4
3
2
Modem
Modem
2
Terminal
Terminal
1
1

FIG.1

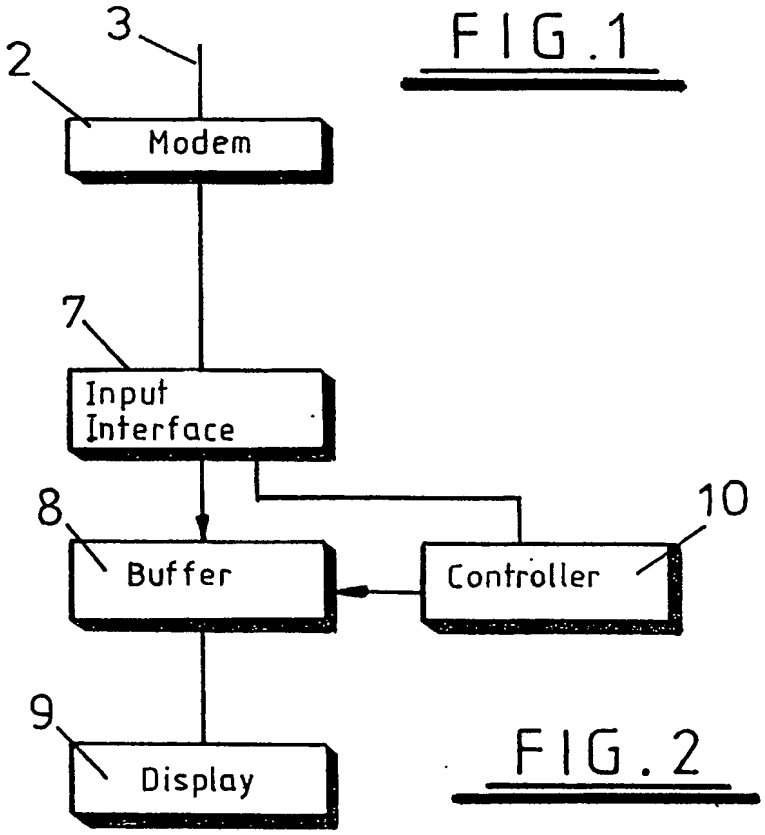

3
2
Modem
7
Input Interface
8
Buffer
Controller
10
9
Display

FIG.2

15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
J	D	J	J	B	A	B	D	J	H	H	H	G	E	J

FIG. 3

1	1	0	0	0	0	(J - - - -)
2	1	2	0	0	0	(J E - - -)
3	1	2	3	0	0	(J E G - -)
4	1	2	3	4	0	(J E G H -)
5	1	2	3	4	5	(J E G H H)
6	6	2	3	4	5	(H E G H H)
7	6	2	3	4	5	(H E G H H)
8	6	2	3	8	5	(H E G D H)
9	6	2	3	8	9	(H E G D B)
10	10	2	3	8	9	(A E G D B)
11	10	2	11	8	9	(A E B D B)
12	10	2	11	8	9	(A E B D B)
13	10	2	11	8	9	(A E B D B)
14	10	14	11	8	9	(A D B D B)
15	10	14	11	8	9	(A D B D B)

FIG. 4

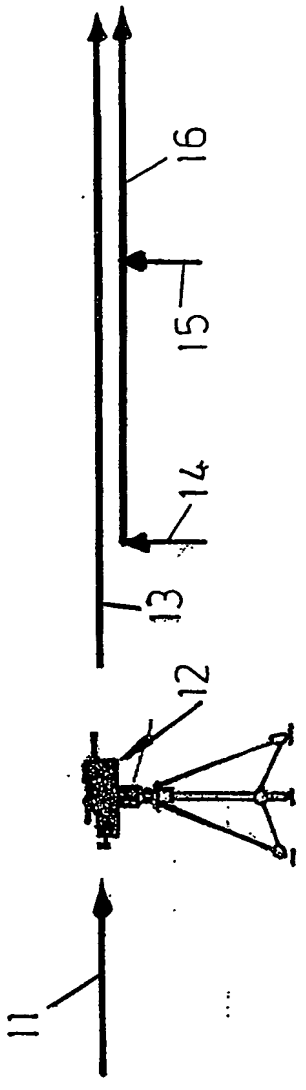


FIG.5

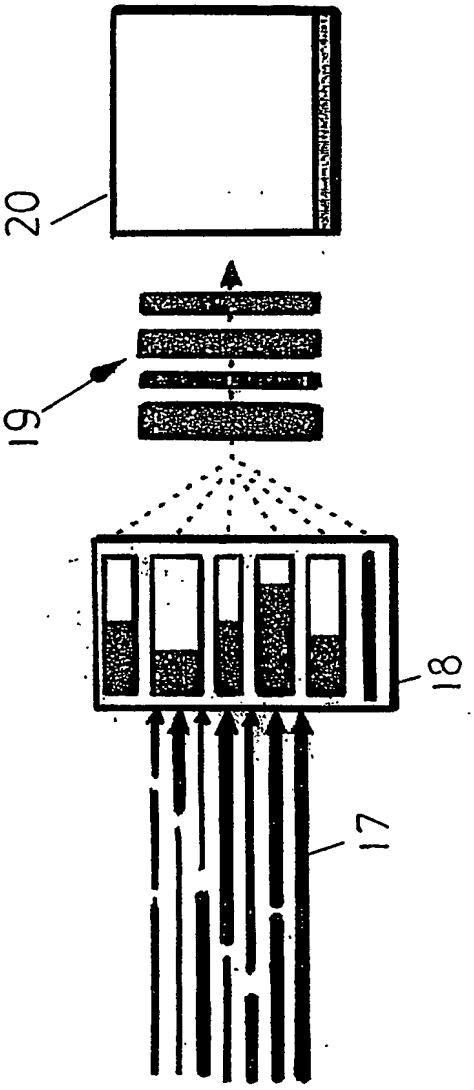


FIG.6

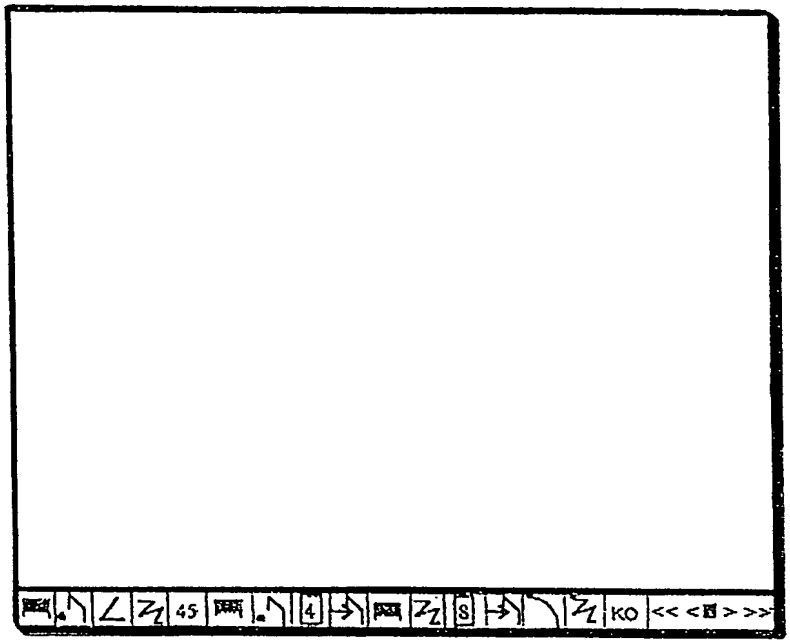


FIG. 7

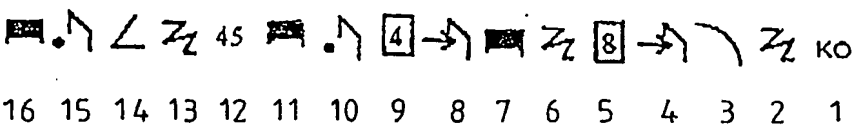


FIG. 8

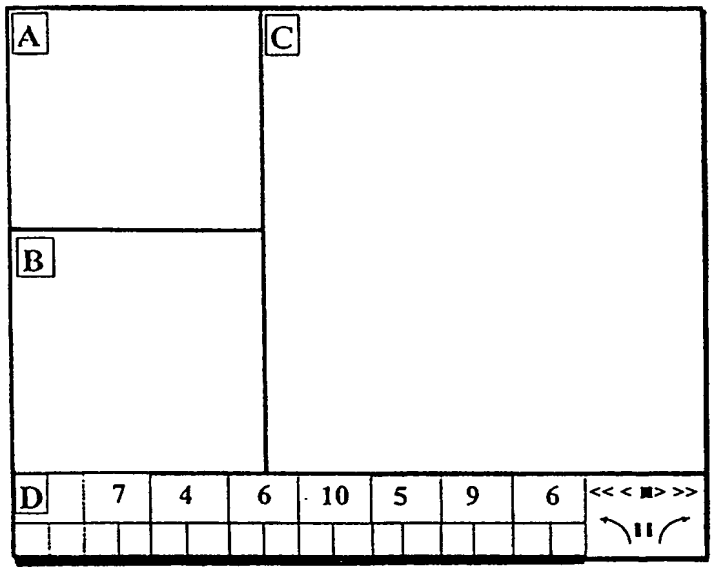


FIG. 9

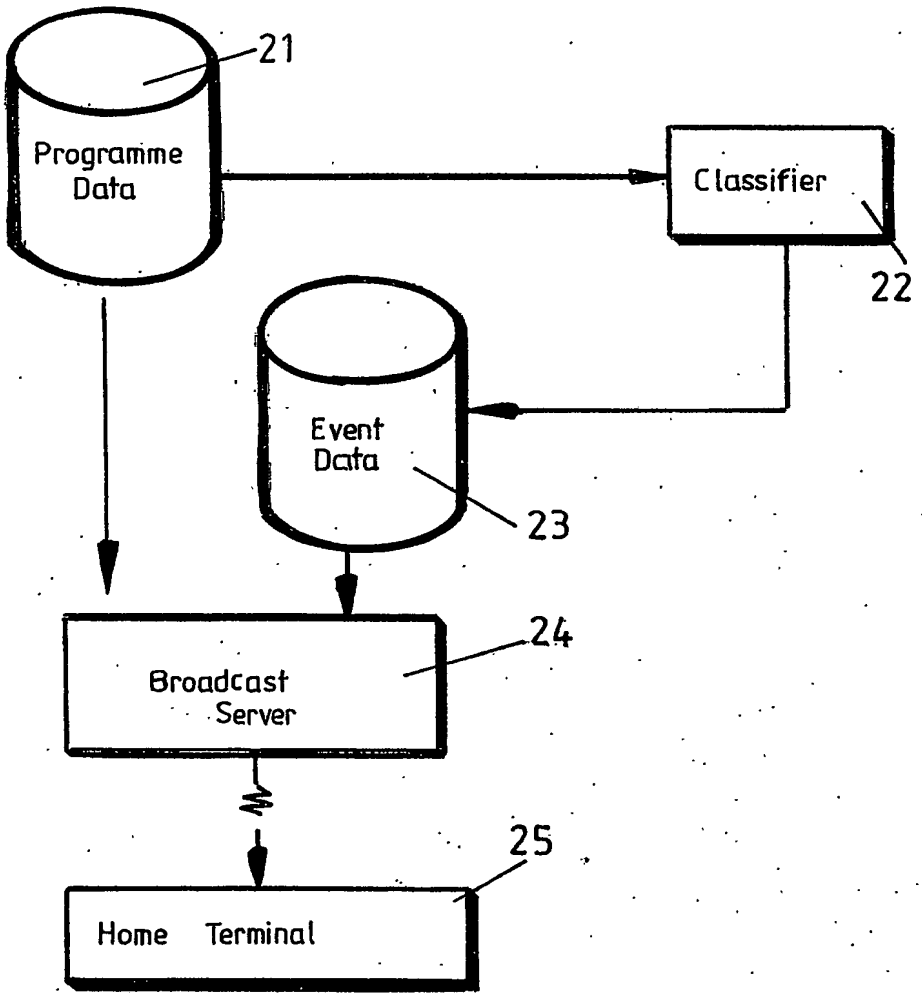

21
Programme Data
Classifier
22
Event Data
23
24
Broadcast Server
25
Home Terminal

FIG. 10

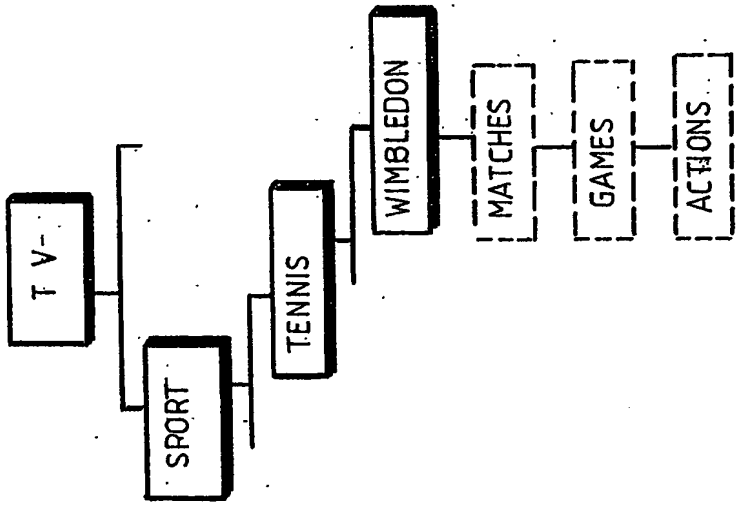


FIG.11

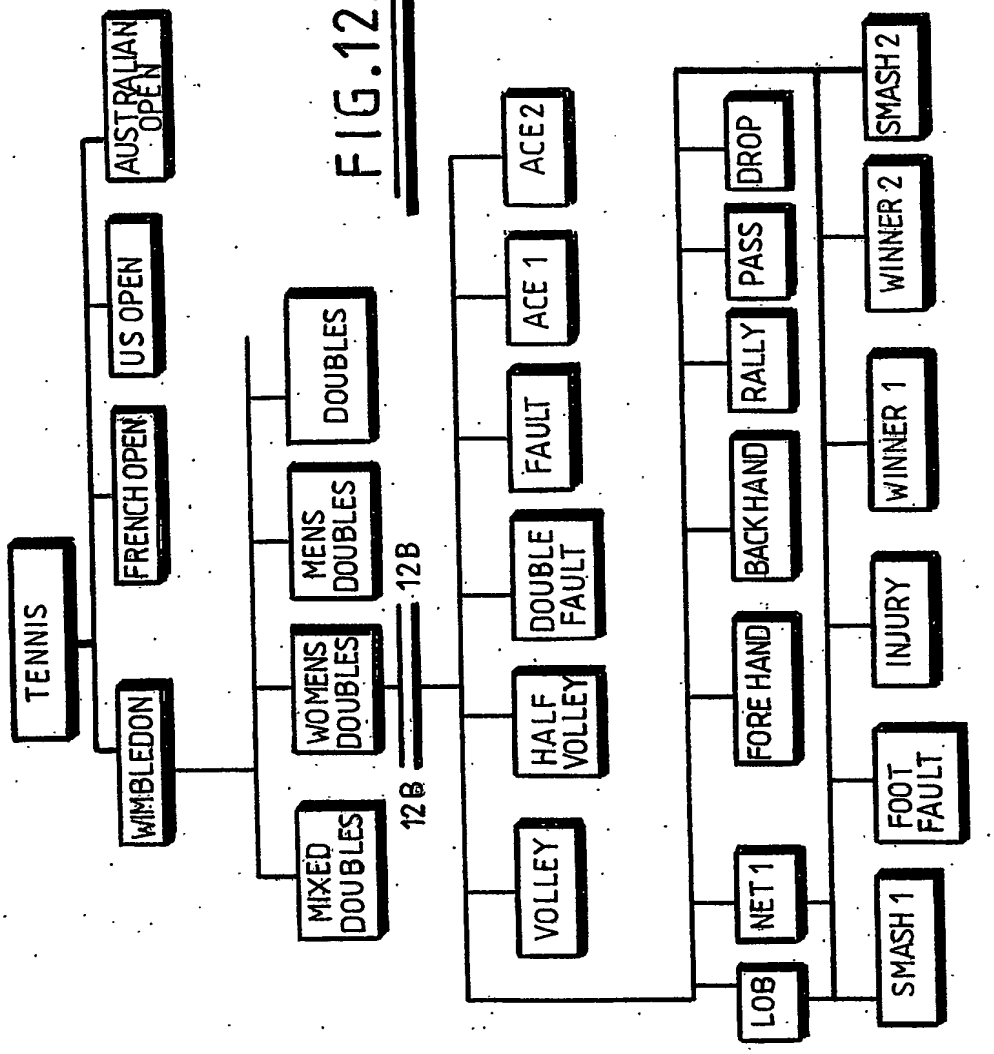

TENNIS
WIMBLEDON
AUSTRALIAN OPEN
US OPEN
FRENCH OPEN
MIXED DOUBLES
WOMENS DOUBLES
MENS DOUBLES
DOUBLES
12B
12B
VOLLEY
HALF VOLLEY
DOUBLE FAULT
FAULT
ACE 1
ACE2
LOB
NET 1
FORE HAND
BACK HAND
RALLY
PASS
DROP
SMASH 1
FOOT FAULT
INJURY
WINNER 1
WINNER 2
SMASH 2

FIG.12A

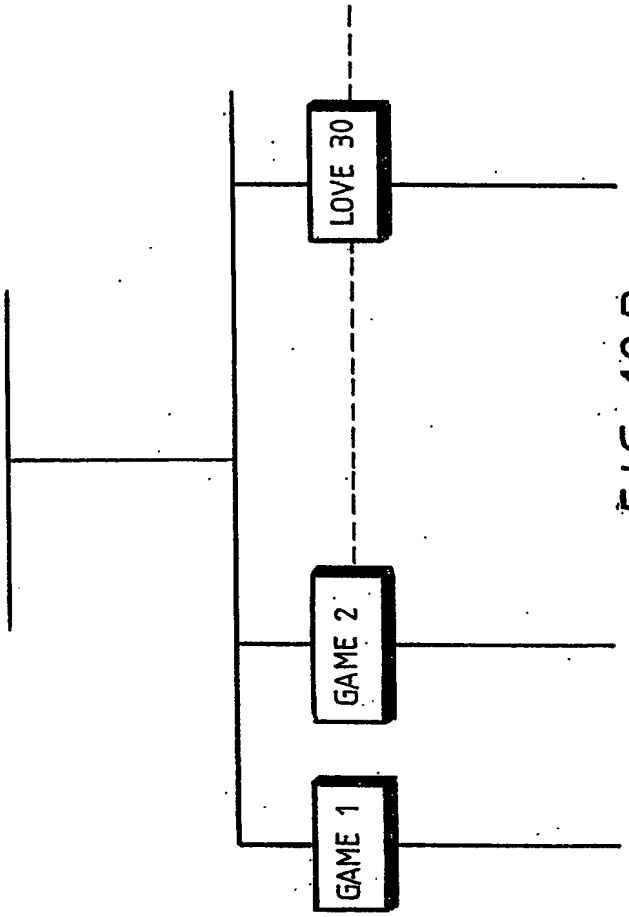


FIG.12B

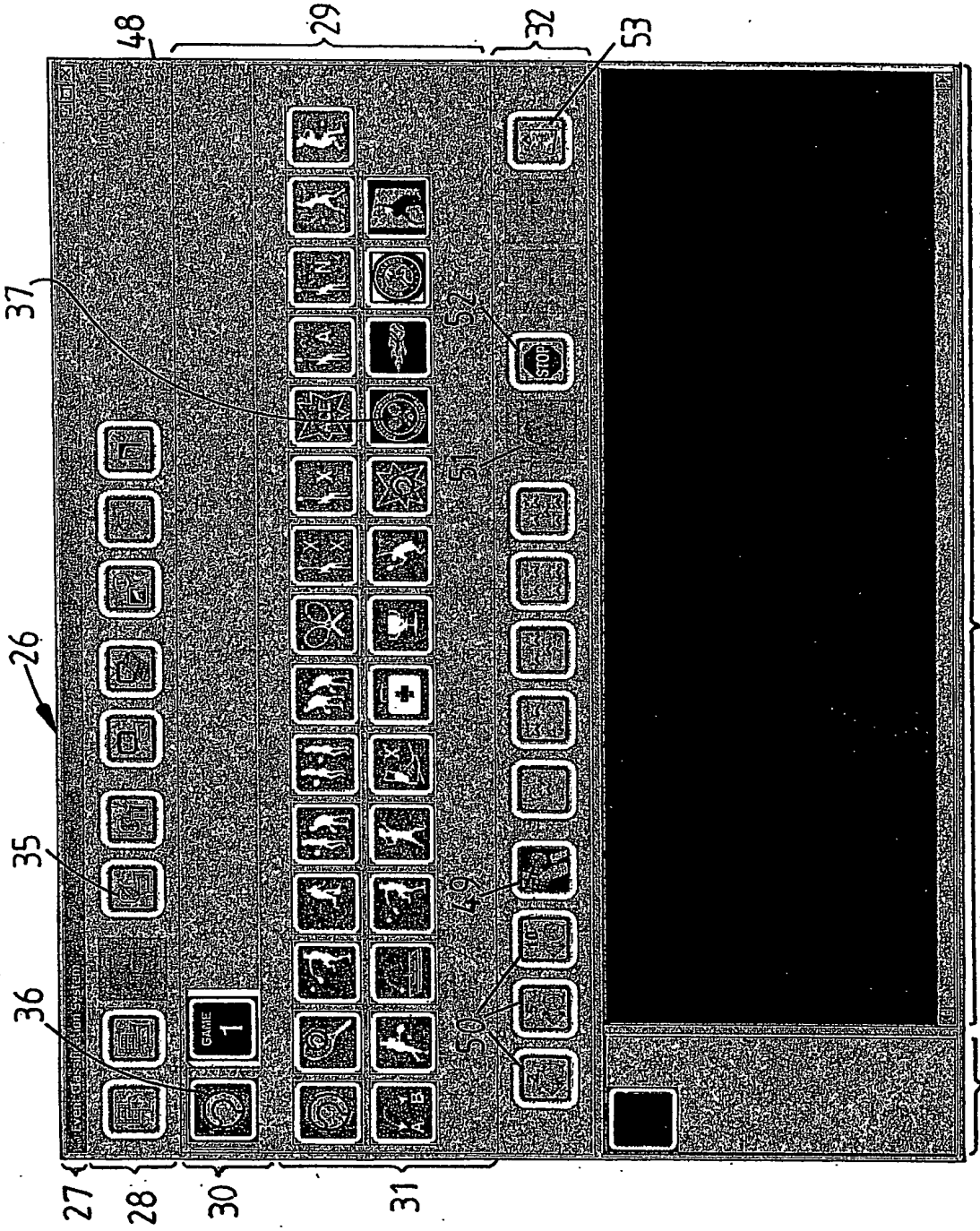


FIG.13A

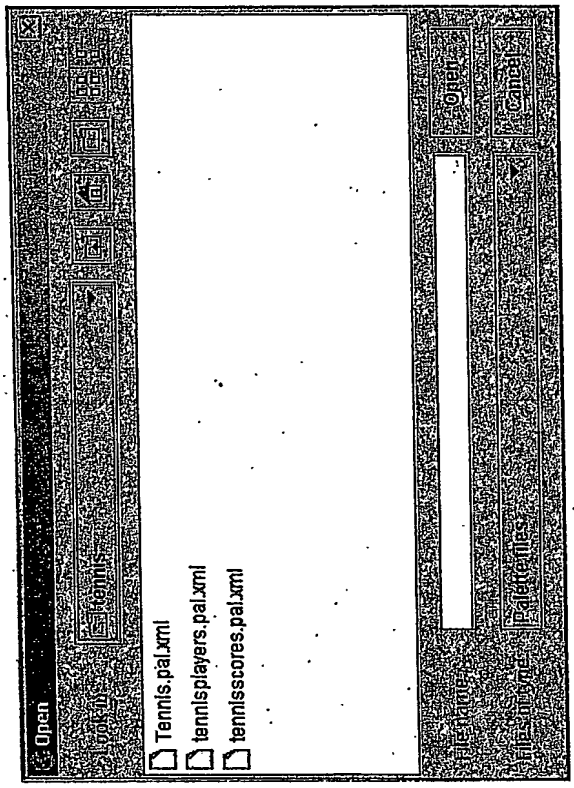

Open
tennis
Tennis.pal.xml
tennisplayers.pal.xml
tennisscores.pal.xml
Open
Cancel
Files of type:
Pal files

FIG. 13B

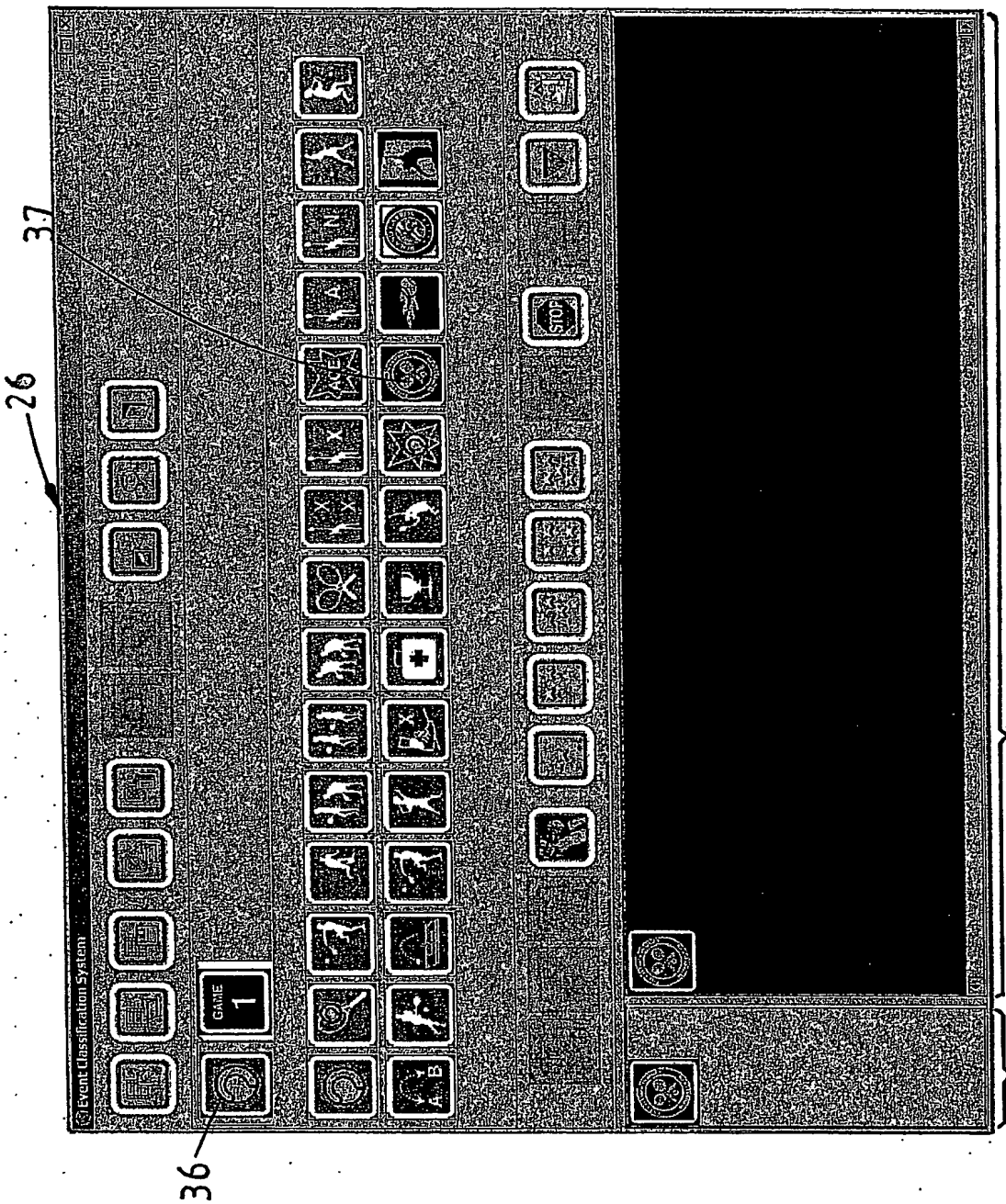


FIG.14A

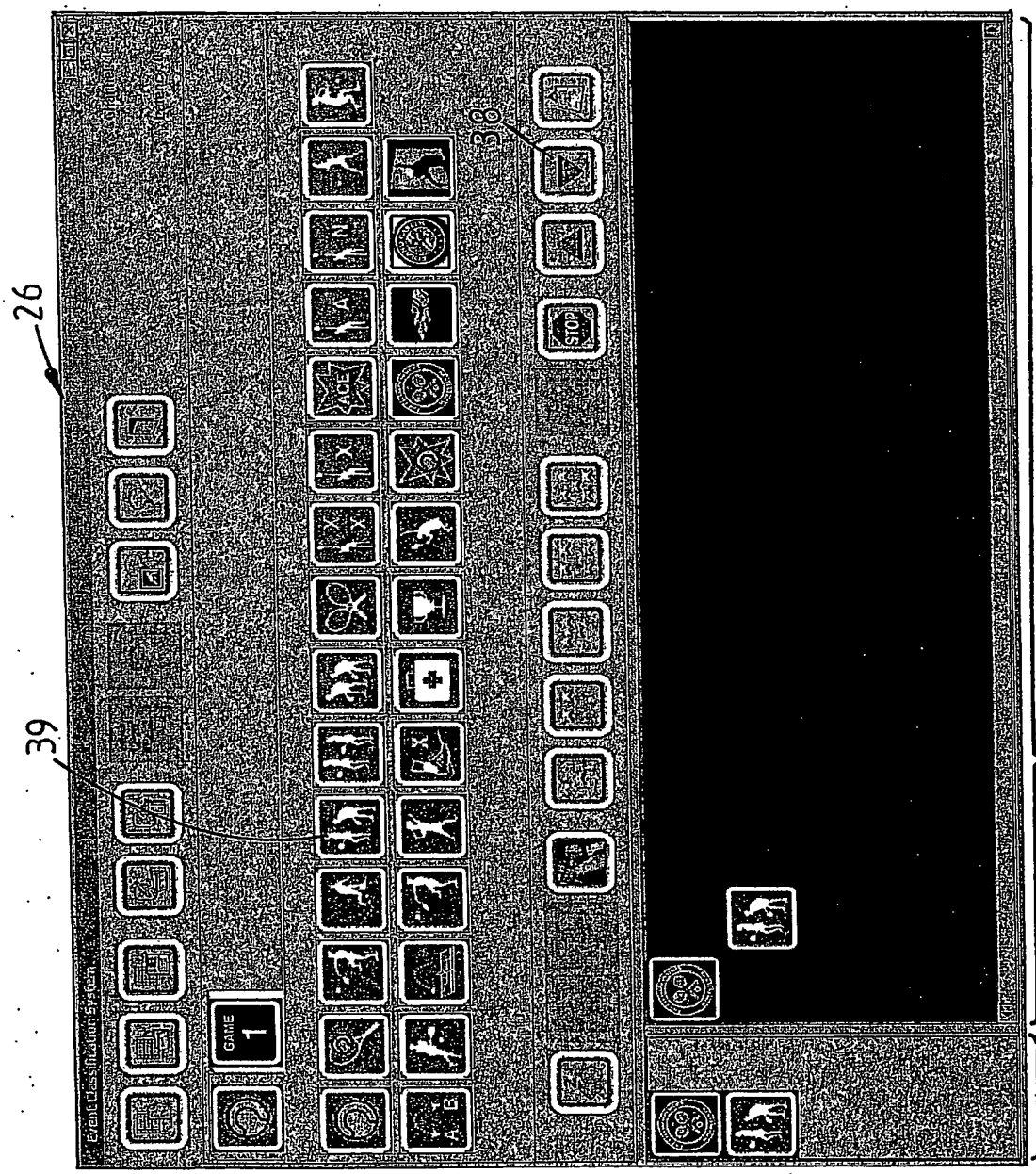


FIG.14B

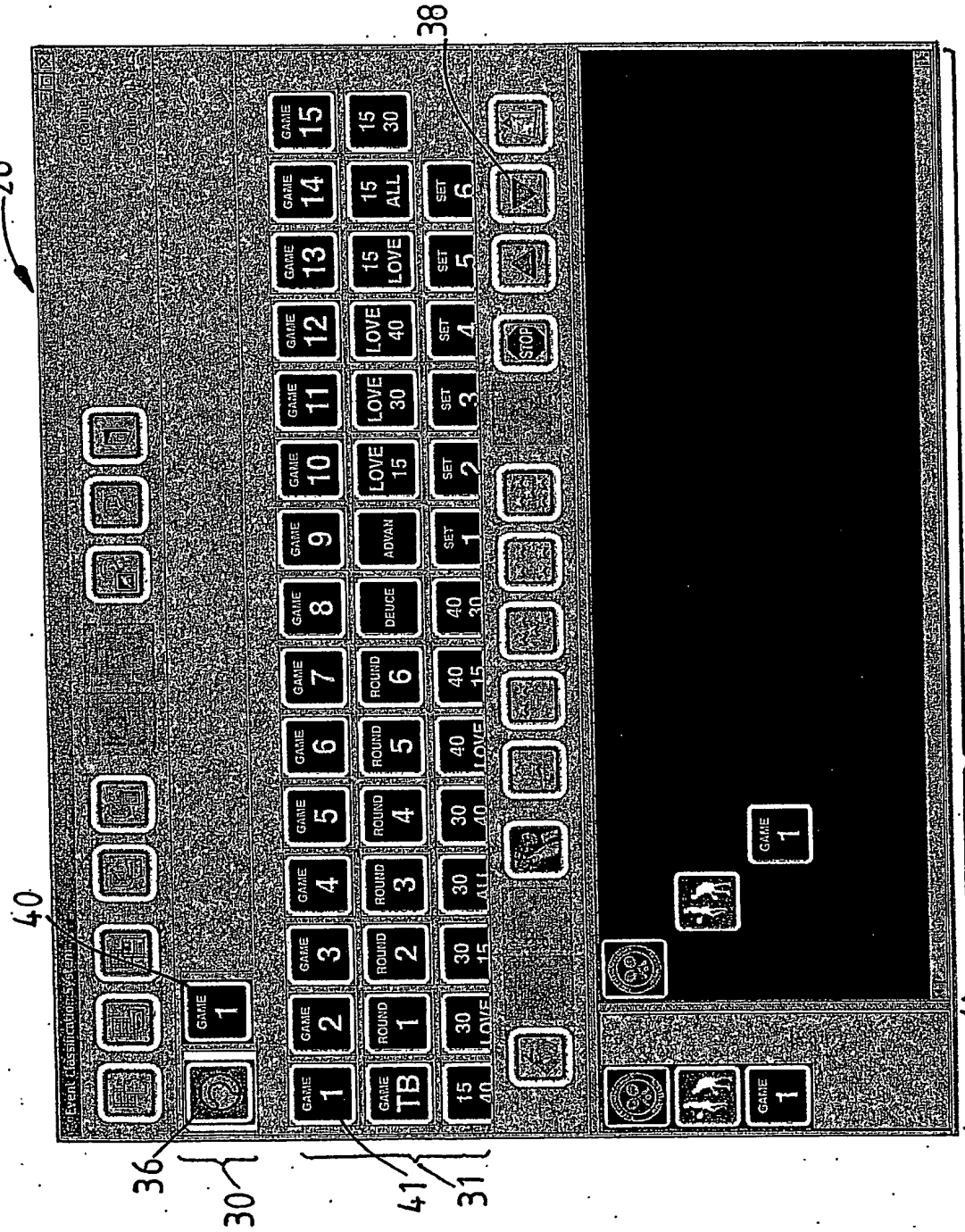

26
38
40
36
30
41
31
33
34
GAME 1
GAME 2
GAME 3
GAME 4
GAME 5
GAME 6
GAME 7
GAME 8
GAME 9
GAME 10
GAME 11
GAME 12
GAME 13
GAME 14
GAME 15
ROUND 1
ROUND 2
ROUND 3
ROUND 4
ROUND 5
ROUND 6
DEUCE
ADVAN
LOVE 15
LOVE 30
LOVE 40
LOVE 15
15 ALL
15 30
30 LOVE
30 15
30 ALL
30 40
40 LOVE
40 15
40 30
SET 1
SET 2
SET 3
SET 4
SET 5
SET 6
STOP
GAME TB
15 40

FIG.14C

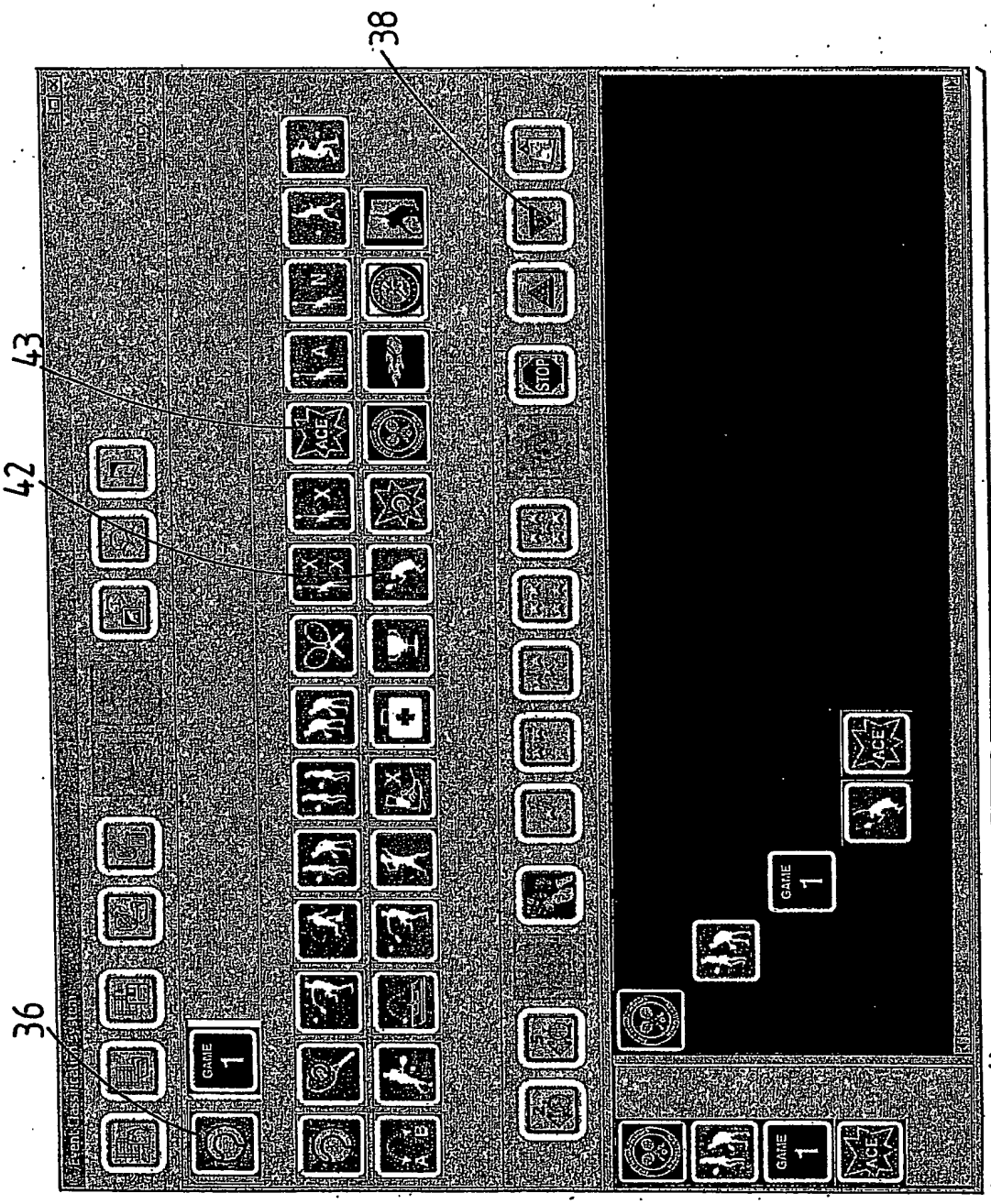


FIG.14D

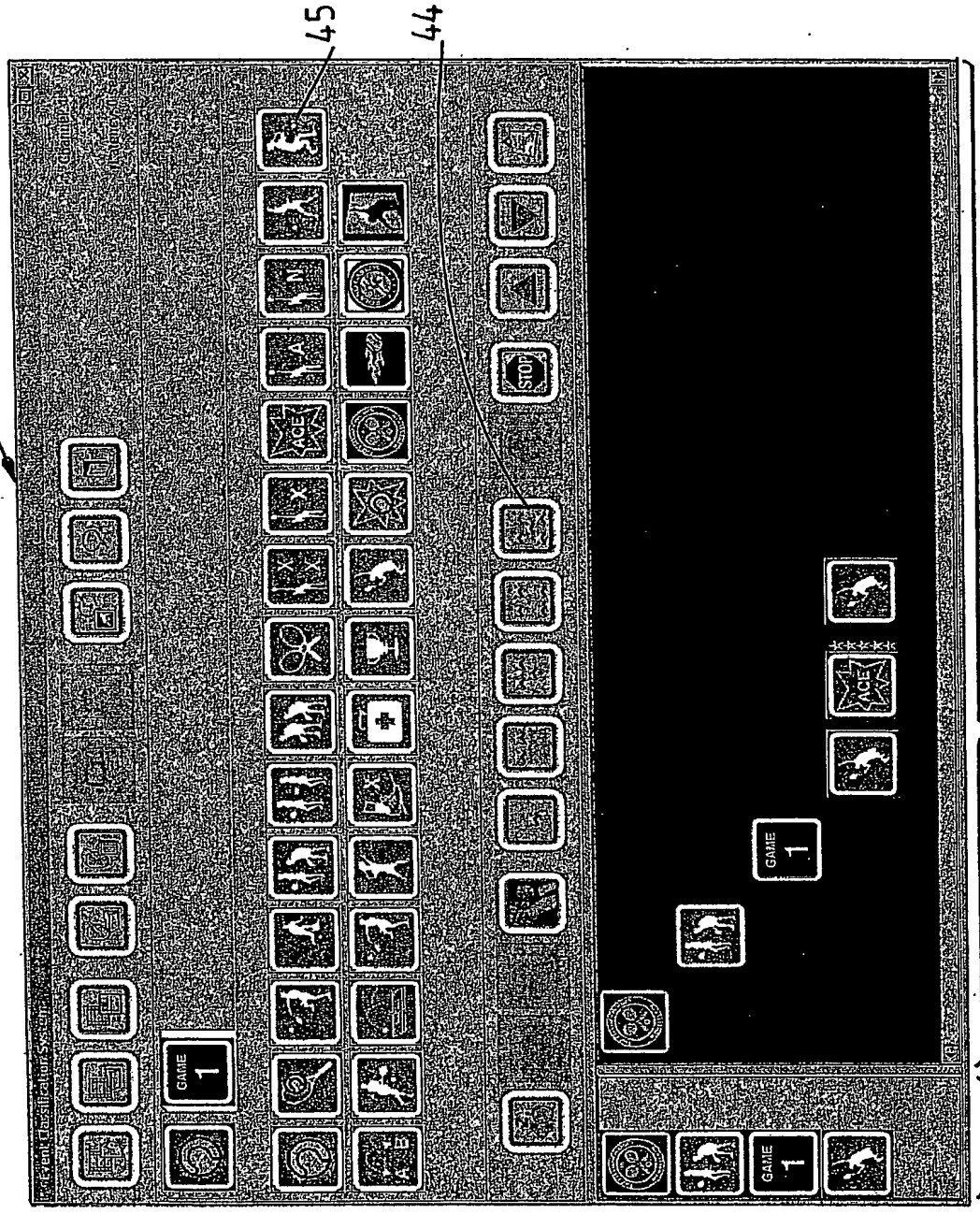


FIG.14E

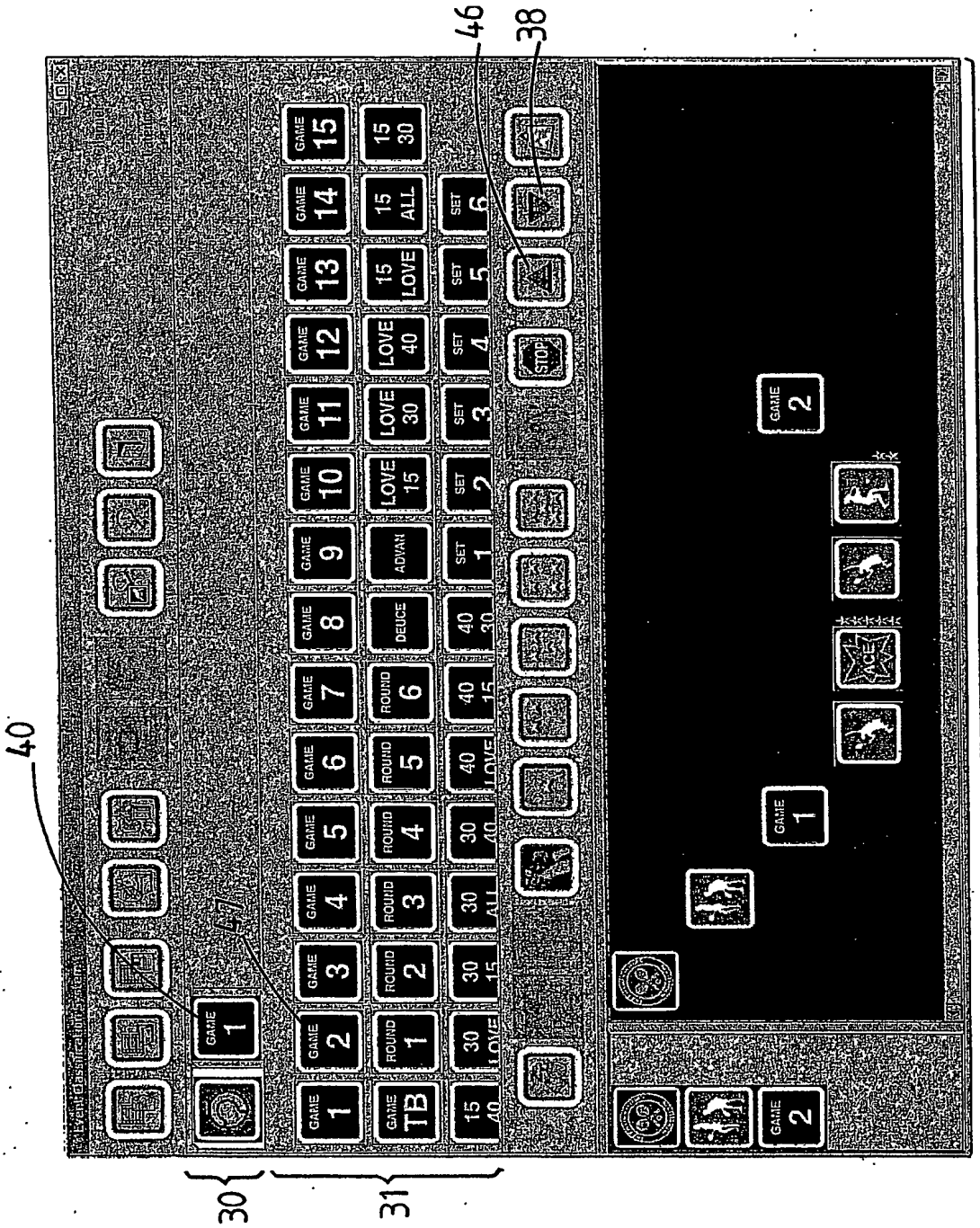

40
47
46
38
30
31
33
34
GAME 1
GAME 2
GAME 3
GAME 4
GAME 5
GAME 6
GAME 7
GAME 8
GAME 9
GAME 10
GAME 11
GAME 12
GAME 13
GAME 14
GAME 15
ROUND 1
ROUND 2
ROUND 3
ROUND 4
ROUND 5
ROUND 6
TB
DEUCE
ADVAN
LOVE 15
LOVE 30
LOVE 40
15 LOVE
15 ALL
15 30
30 LOVE
30 15
30 ALL
30 40
40 LOVE
40 15
40 30
SET 1
SET 2
SET 3
SET 4
SET 5
SET 6
STOP
ACE

FIG.14F

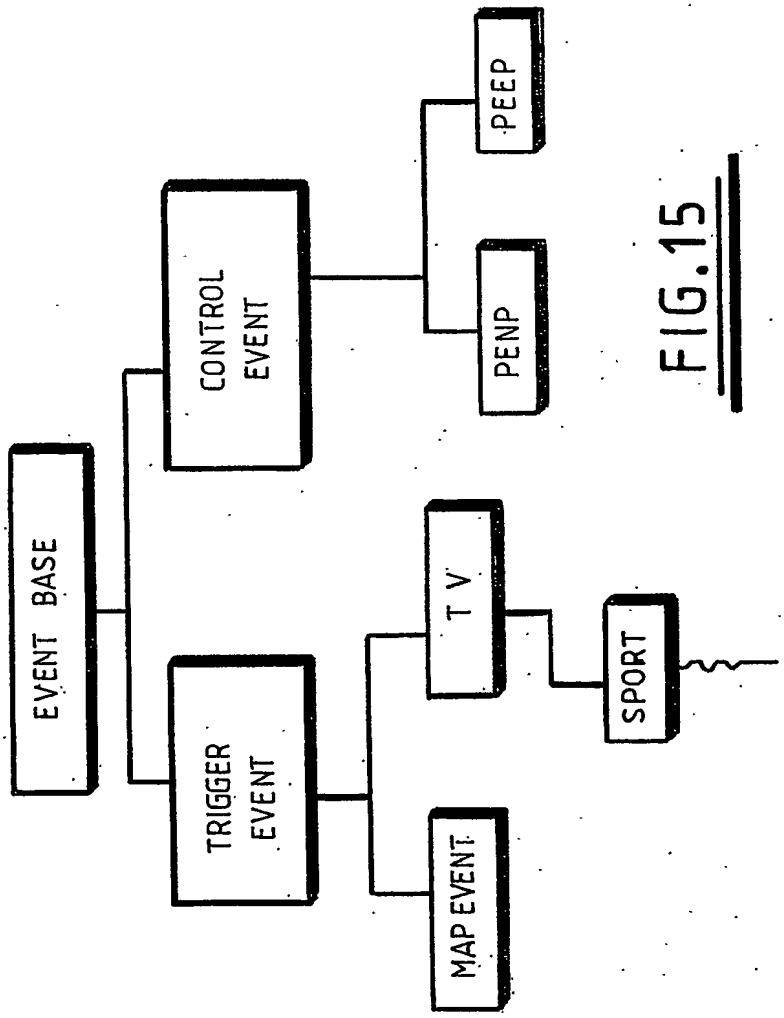

EVENT BASE
CONTROL EVENT
TRIGGER EVENT
PEEP
PENP
T V
MAP EVENT
SPORT

FIG.15

Ob1

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.wimbledon"
SequenceNo	00001
StartTime	1101050140
EndTime	##########
Duration	##########
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	0502010
Name	"Wimbledon Final"
Parent	-1
Iconfile	"Wimbledon"
Rating	0

FIG.16A

Ob2

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.womensdoubles"
SequenceNo	00002
StartTime	1101050250
EndTime	##########
Duration	##########
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Womens Doubles"
Parent	00001
Iconfile	"Womens Doubles"
Rating	0

FIG.16B

Ob3

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.GameOne"
SequenceNo	00003
StartTime	1101050260
EndTime	##########
Duration	##########
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Game 1"
Parent	00002
Iconfile	"Game1"
Rating	0

FIG.16C

Ob4

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.Serve"
SequenceNo	00004
StartTime	1101050270
EndTime	1101051050
Duration	0000000780
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Serve"
Parent	00003
Iconfile	"Serve"
Rating	0

Ob5

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.Ace"
SequenceNo	00005
StartTime	1101051050
EndTime	##########
Duration	##########
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Ace
Parent	00003
Iconfile	"Ace
Rating	0

FIG.16D

Ob5

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.Ace"
SequenceNo	00005
StartTime	1101051050
EndTime	1101052505
Duration	0000001455
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Ace
Parent	00003
Iconfile	"Ace
Rating	5

Ob6

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.Serve"
SequenceNo	00006
StartTime	1101052505
EndTime	##########
Duration	##########
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Serve"
Parent	00003
Iconfile	"Serve"
Rating	0

FIG.16E

Ob6

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.Serve
SequenceNo	00006
StartTime	1101052505
EndTime	1101053000
Duration	0000000495
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Serve"
Parent	00003
Iconfile	"Serve"
Rating	0

Ob7

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.Return"
SequenceNo	00007
StartTime	1101053000
EndTime	1101054125
Duration	0000001125
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Return"
Parent	00003
Iconfile	"Return"
Rating	2

Ob8

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.GameTwo"
SequenceNo	00008
StartTime	1101054125
EndTime	###########
Duration	###########
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Game2"
Parent	00002
Iconfile	"Game2"
Rating	0

Ob3

MAPEVENT	
Category	"tv.sport.tennis.GameOne"
SequenceNo	00003
StartTime	1101050260
EndTime	1101054125
Duration	0000003865
Channel	01
ProgrammeID	#undefined#
Name	"Game 1"
Parent	00002
Iconfile	"Game1"
Rating	0

FIG.16F

Pkt 1:

```
<PKTSTRT><NEW><SequenceNo=00001><Category="tv.sport.tennis.wimbledon"><StartTime=1101050140>
<Channel=01><ProgrammeID=0502010><Name="Wimbledon Final"><Parent=-1><Iconfile="Wimbledon"><PKTEND>
```

FIG.17A

Pkt 2:

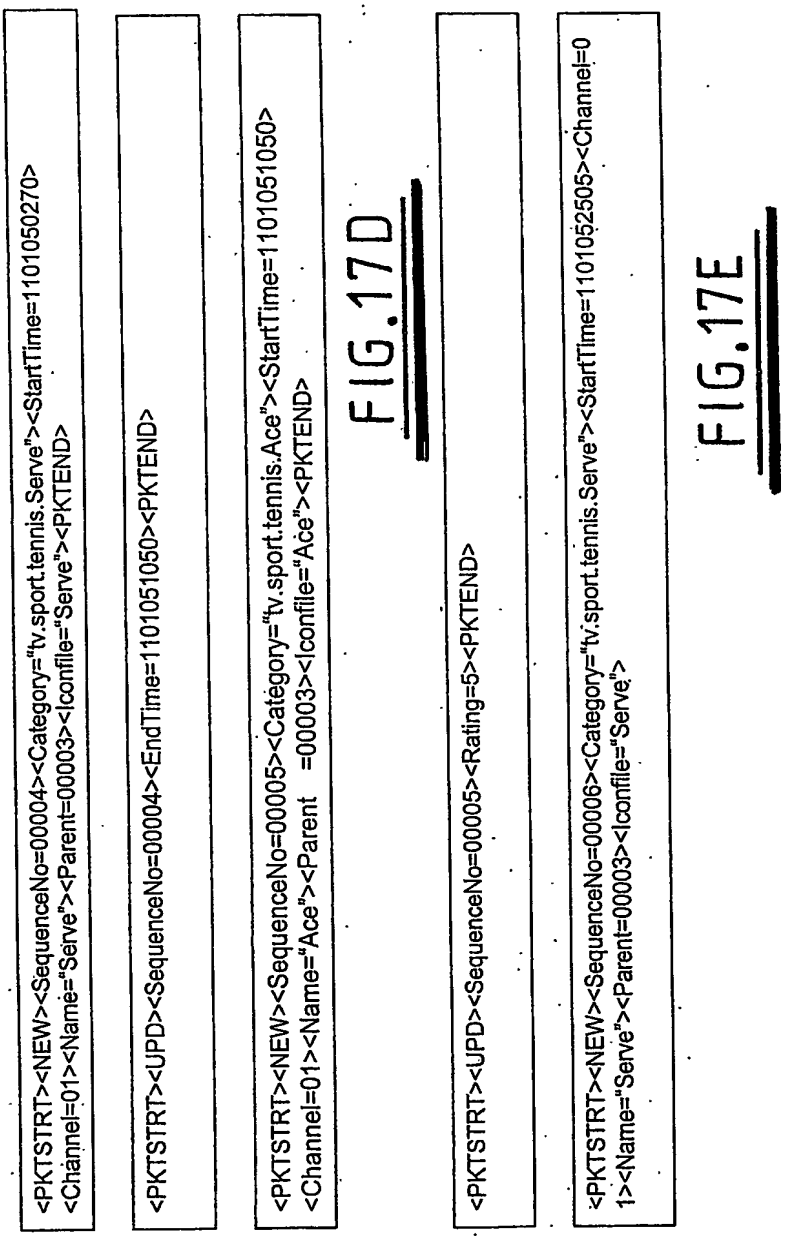
```
<PKTSTRT><NEW><SequenceNo=00002><Category="tv.sport.tennis.womensdoubles"><StartTime=1101050250>
<Channel=01> <Name="Womens Doubles"><Parent=00001>< Iconfile="Womens Doubles"><PKTEND>
```

FIG 17B

Pkt 3:

```
<PKTSTRT><NEW><SequenceNo=00003><Category="tv.sport.tennis.GameOne"><StartTime=1101050260>
<Channel=01> <Name="Game One"><Parent=00002>< Iconfile="Game One"><PKTEND>
```

FIG.17C


Pkt 4:
<PKTSTRT><NEW><SequenceNo=00004><Category="tv.sport.tennis.Serve"><StartTime=1101050270>
<Channel=01><Name="Serve"><Parent=00003><Iconfile="Serve"><PKTEND>
Pkt 5:
<PKTSTRT><UPD><SequenceNo=00004><EndTime=1101051050><PKTEND>
Pkt 6:
<PKTSTRT><NEW><SequenceNo=00005><Category="tv.sport.tennis.Ace"><StartTime=1101051050>
<Channel=01><Name="Ace"><Parent =00003><Iconfile="Ace"><PKTEND>
Pkt 7:
<PKTSTRT><UPD><SequenceNo=00005><Rating=5><PKTEND>
Pkt 8:
<PKTSTRT><NEW><SequenceNo=00006><Category="tv.sport.tennis.Serve"><StartTime=1101052505><Channel=0
1><Name="Serve"><Parent=00003><Iconfile="Serve">
FIG.17D
FIG.17E

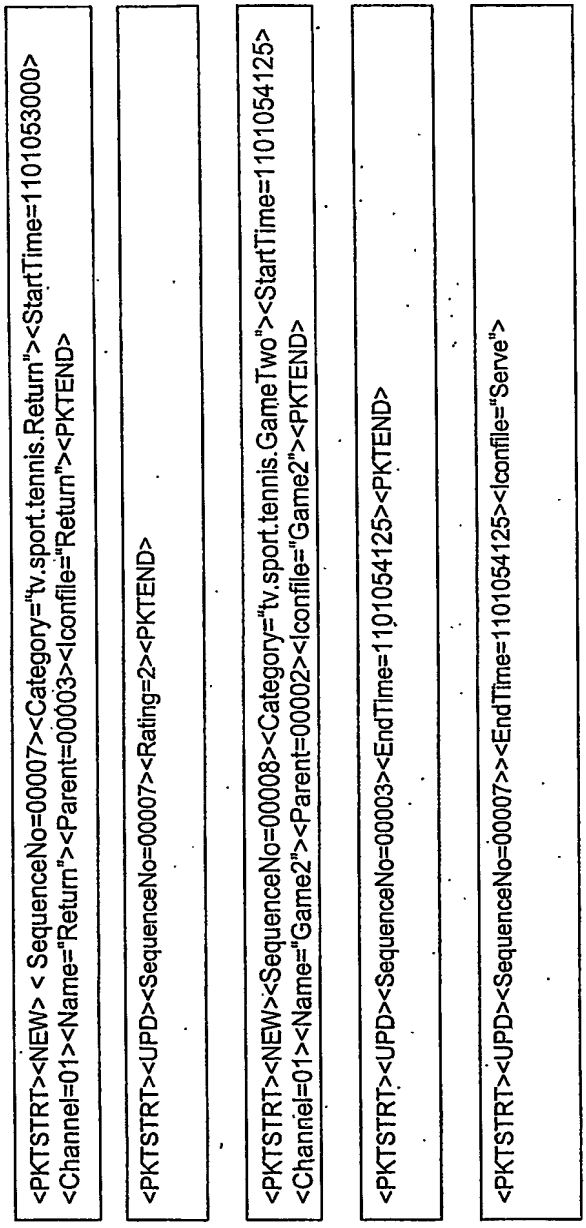

Pkt 9:
<PKTSTRT><NEW> < SequenceNo=00007><Category="tv.sport.tennis.Return"><StartTime=1101053000>
<Channel=01><Name="Return"><Parent=00003><Iconfile="Return"><PKTEND>
Pkt 10:
<PKTSTRT><UPD><SequenceNo=00007><Rating=2><PKTEND>
Pkt 11:
<PKTSTRT><NEW><SequenceNo=00008><Category="tv.sport.tennis.GameTwo"><StartTime=1101054125>
<Channel=01><Name="Game2"><Parent=00002><Iconfile="Game2"><PKTEND>
Pkt 12:
<PKTSTRT><UPD><SequenceNo=00003><EndTime=1101054125><PKTEND>
Pkt 13:
<PKTSTRT><UPD><SequenceNo=00007>><EndTime=1101054125><Iconfile="Serve">>

FIG.17F

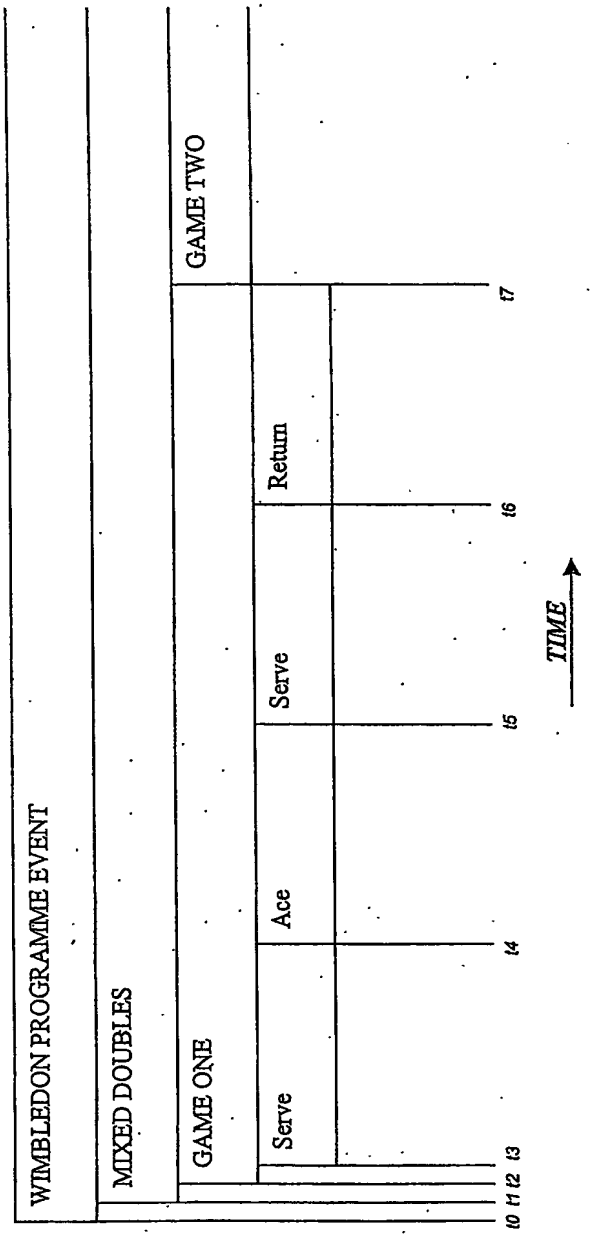

WIMBLEDON PROGRAMME EVENT
MIXED DOUBLES
GAME ONE
GAME TWO
Serve
Ace
Serve
Return
TIME
t0 t1 t2 t3 t4 t5 t6 t7

FIG.18

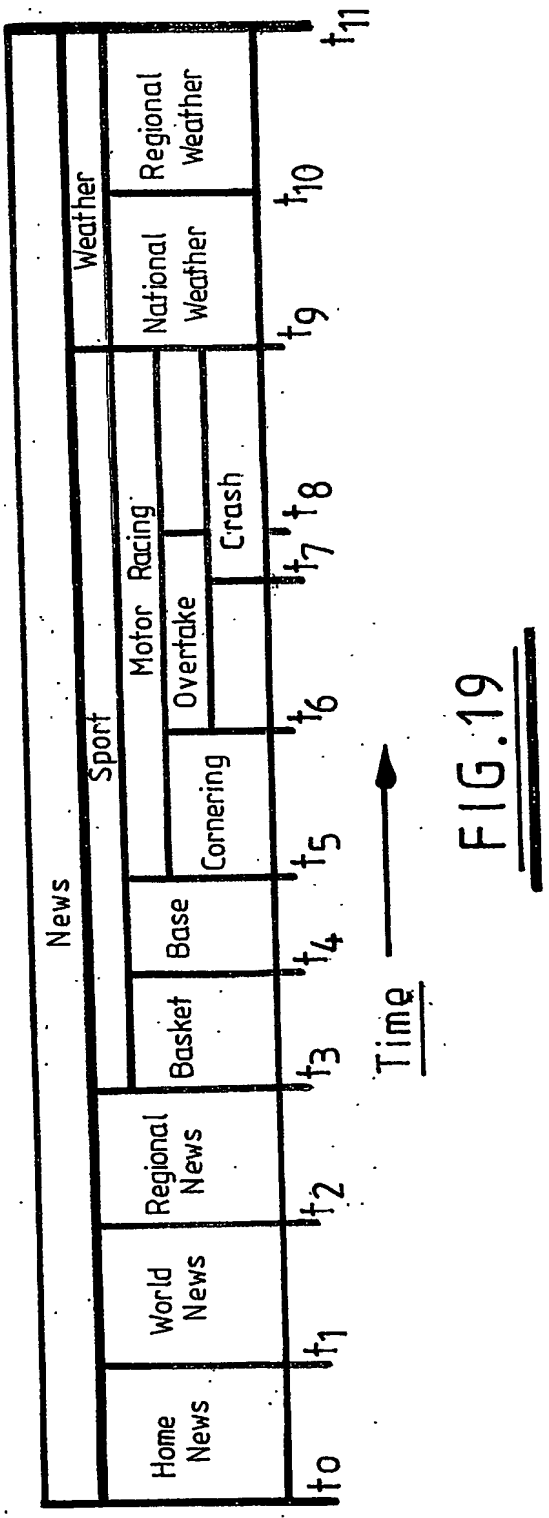

News
Sport
Weather
Home News
World News
Regional News
Basket
Base
Cornering
Overtake
Motor Racing
Crash
National Weather
Regional Weather
t0
t1
t2
t3
t4
t5
t6
t7
t8
t9
t10
t11
Time

FIG.19

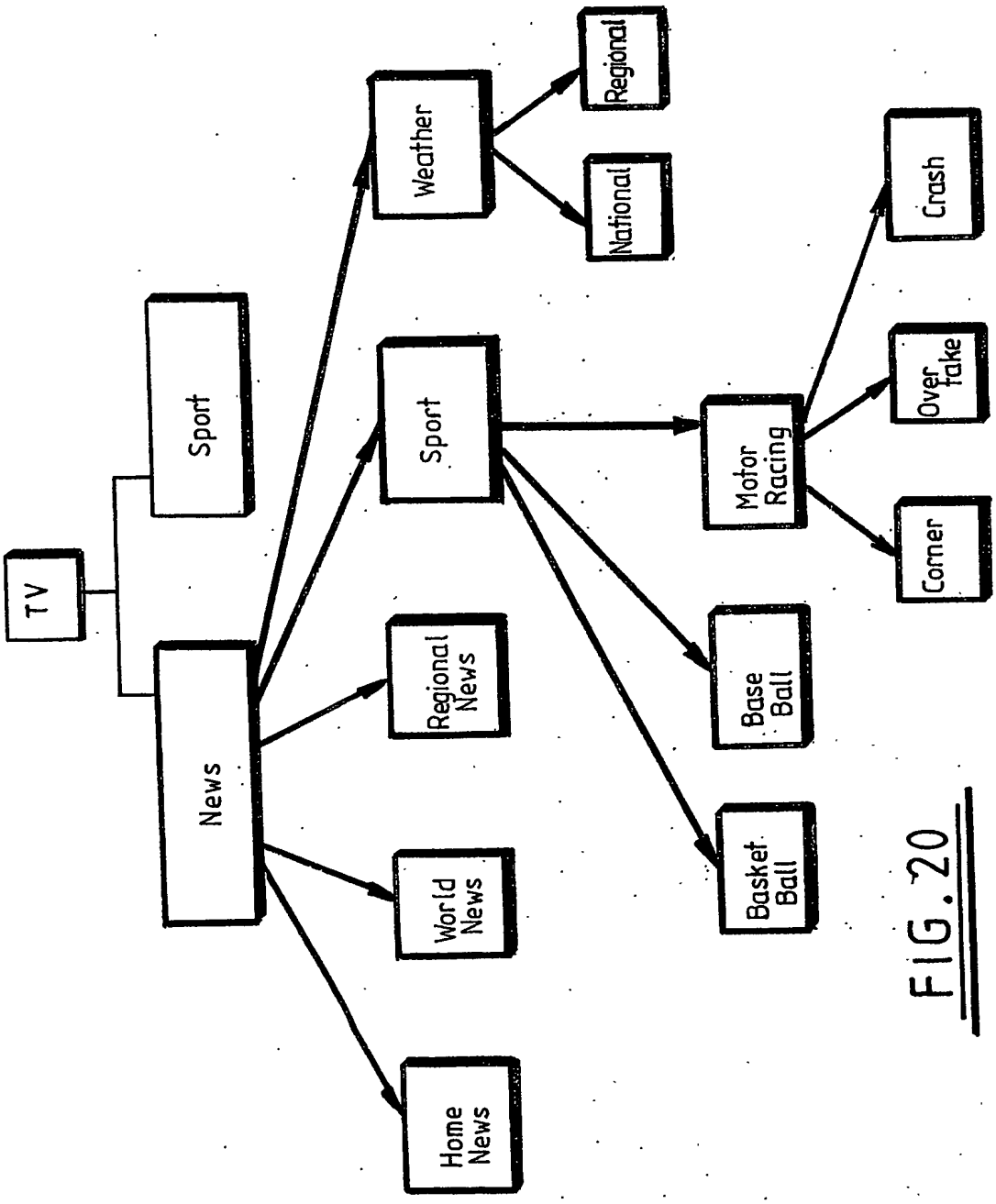

TV
Sport
News
Weather
Regional
National
Sport
Regional News
World News
Home News
Motor Racing
Crash
Over take
Corner
Base Ball
Basket Ball

FIG. 20

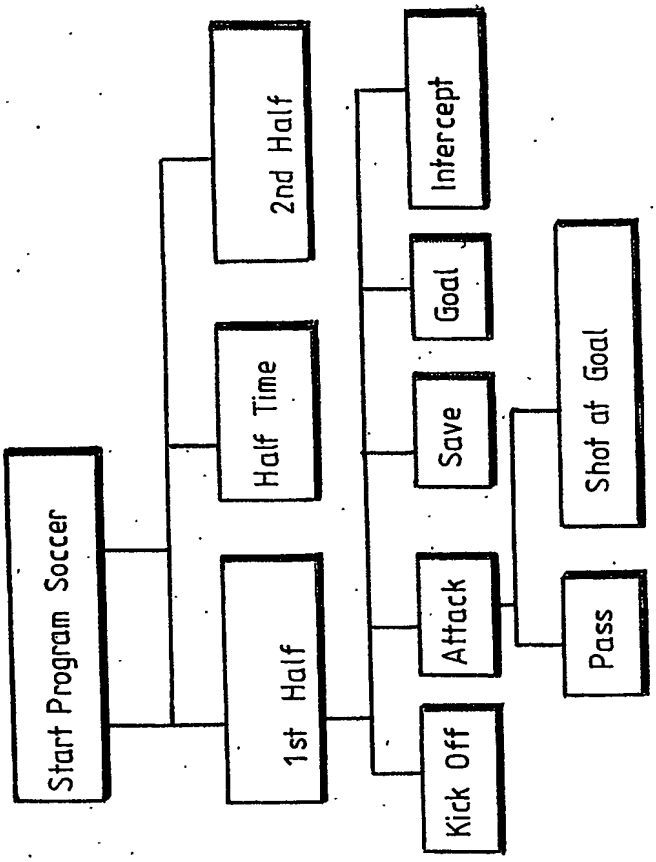

Start Program Soccer
1st Half
2nd Half
Half Time
Kick Off
Attack
Save
Goal
Intercept
Pass
Shot at Goal

FIG. 21

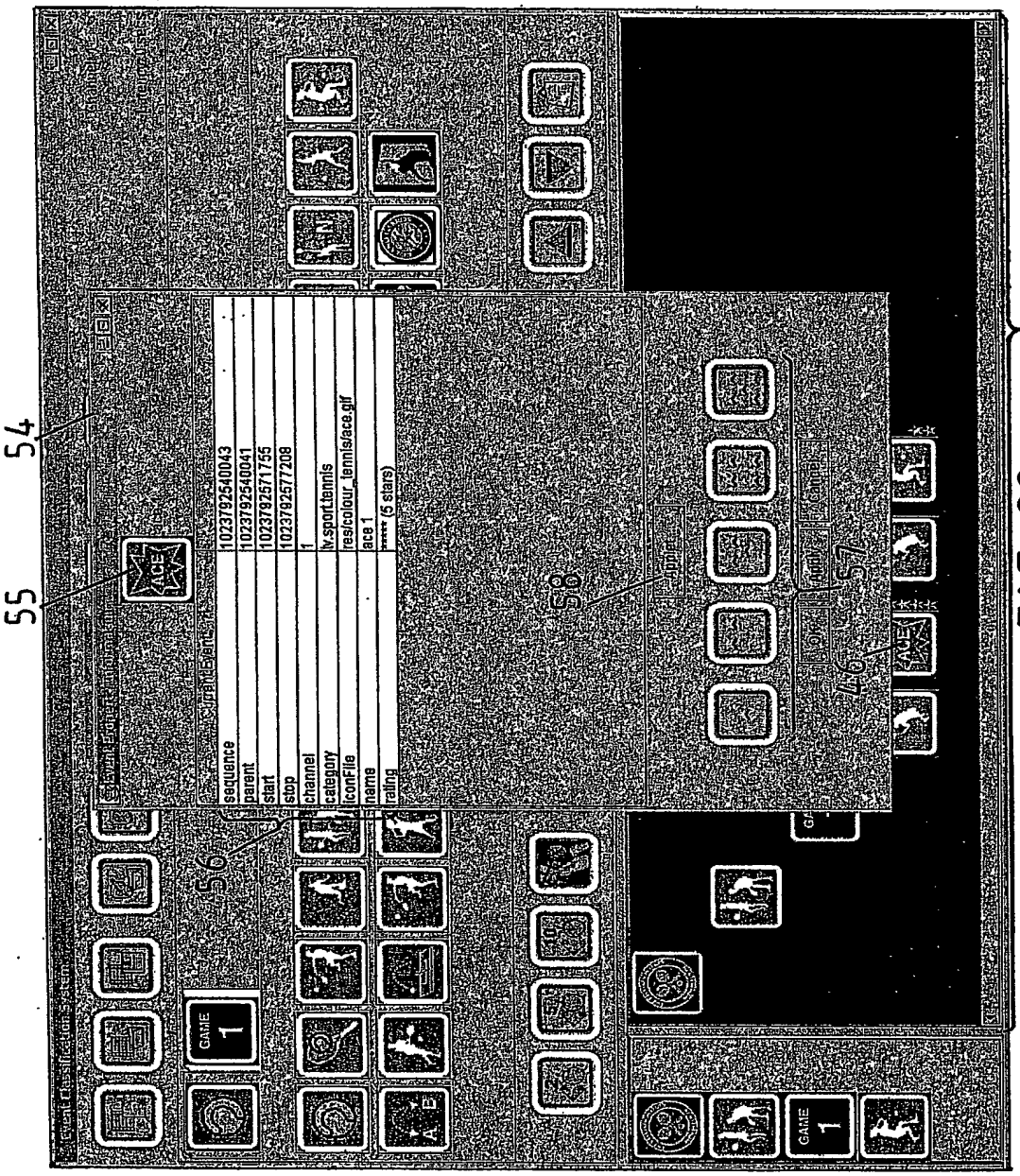

54
55
56
58
57
33
sequence
parent
start
stop
channel
category
iconFile
name
rating
1023792540043
1023792540041
1023792571755
1023792577208
1
tv.sportTennis
res/colour_tennis/ace.gif
ace 1
***** (5 stars)
GAME
1
ACE

FIG. 22

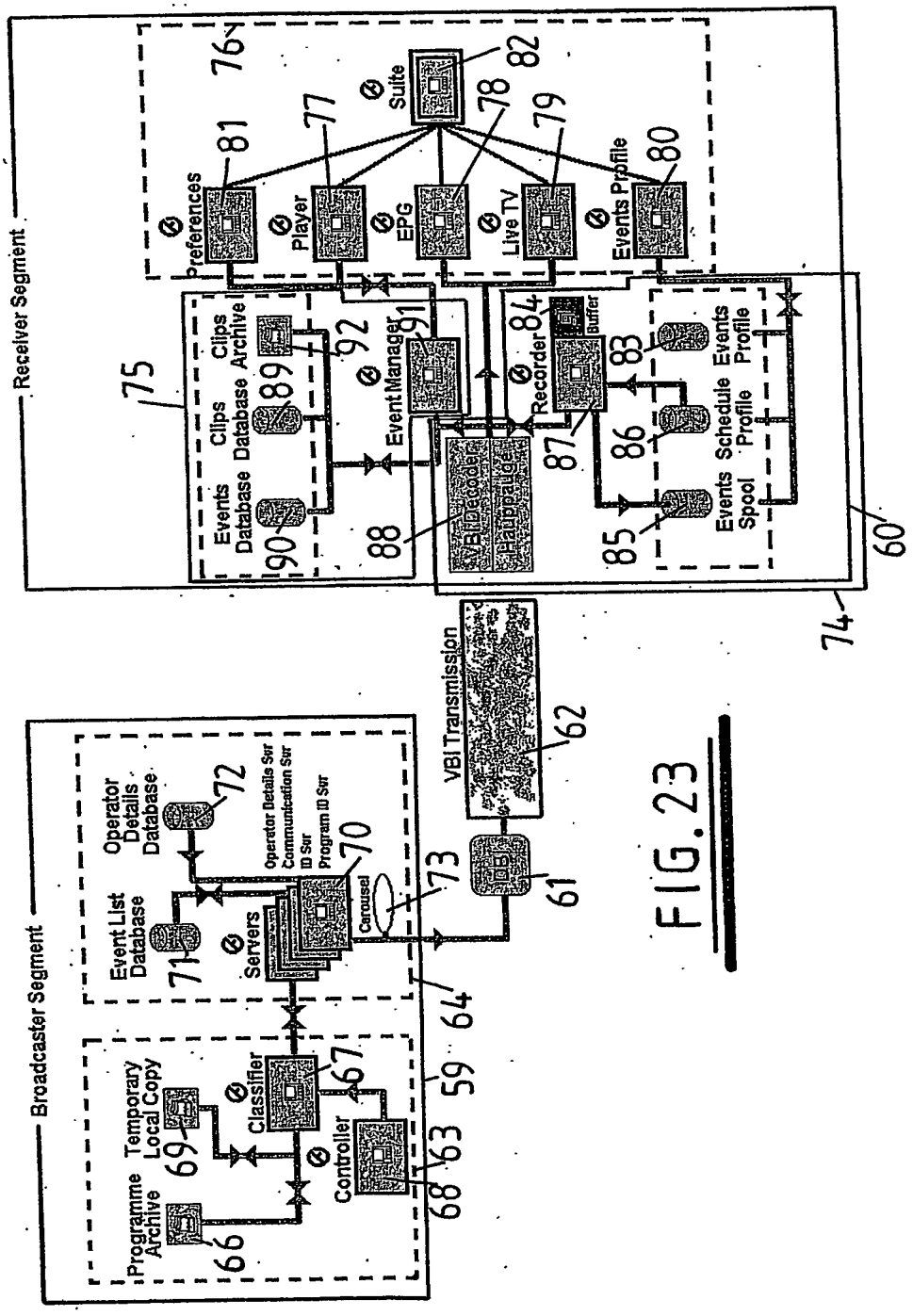

Receiver Segment
Preferences
Player
EPG
Live TV
Events Profile
Suite
Events Database
Clips Database
Clips Archive
Event Manager
Recorder
Buffer
Events Schedule Profile
Events Spool
Events Profile
Bitdecoder
Hauppauge
VBI Transmission
Broadcaster Segment
Operator Details Database
Event List Database
Servers
Operator Details Svr
Communication Svr
ID Svr
Program ID Svr
Carousel
Temporary Local Copy
Classifier
Controller
Programme Archive
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
60
74
62
61
73
70
72
71
64
59
67
69
63
68
66

FIG. 23

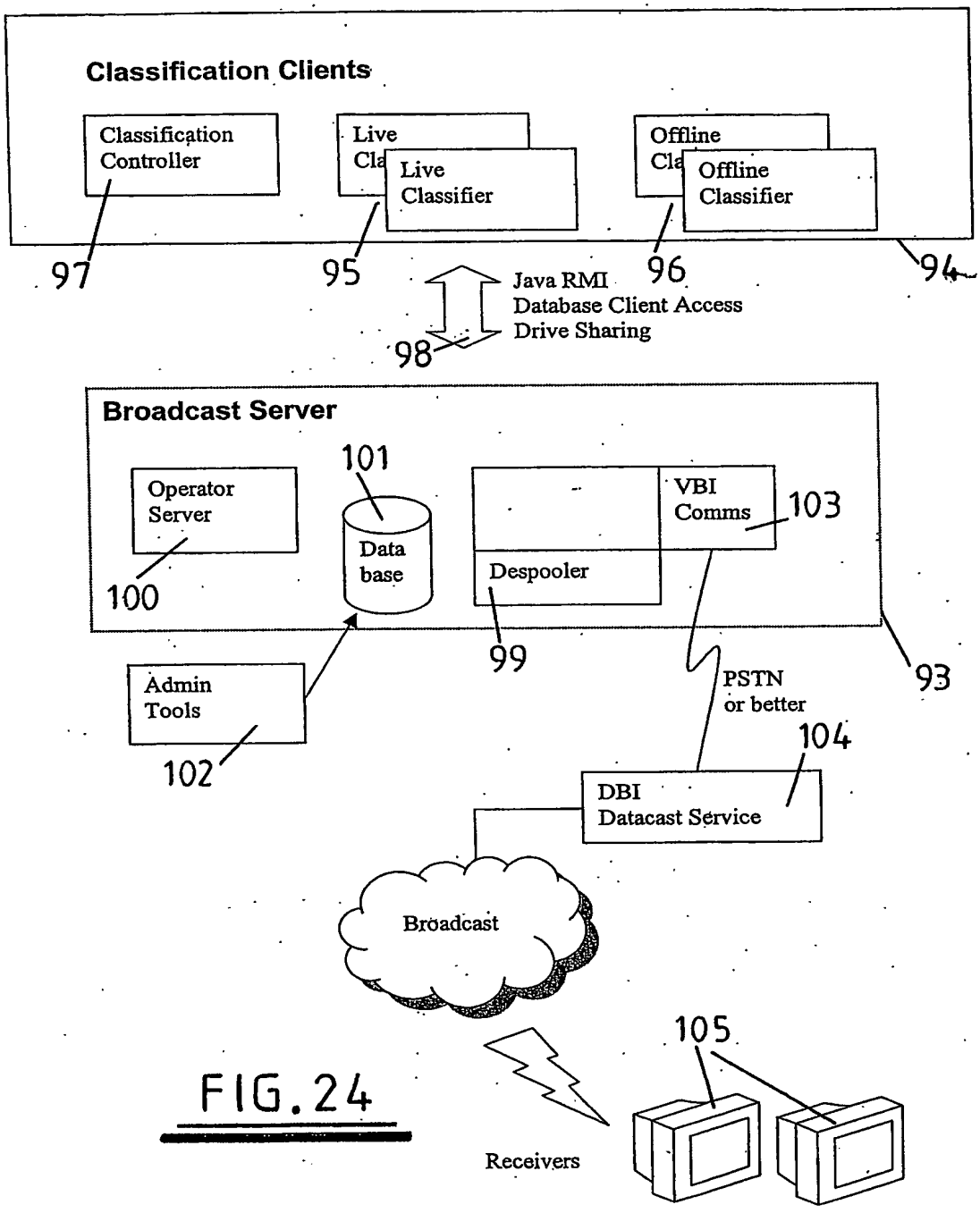

Classification Clients
Classification Controller
Live Classifier
Offline Classifier
97
95
96
94
Java RMI
Database Client Access
Drive Sharing
98
Broadcast Server
101
Operator Server
Data base
VBI Comms
103
Despooler
100
99
93
Admin Tools
PSTN or better
104
102
DBI Datacast Service
Broadcast
105
Receivers

FIG. 24

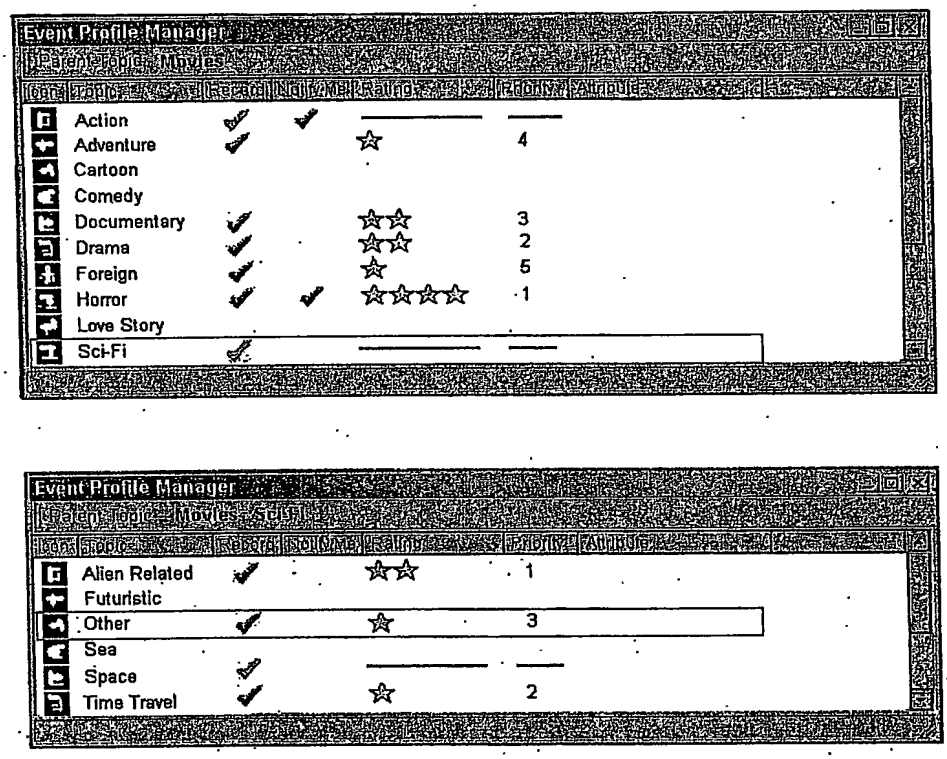

Event Profile Manager
Parent Topic: Movies
Topic
Action
Adventure
Cartoon
Comedy
Documentary
Drama
Foreign
Horror
Love Story
Sci-Fi
4
3
2
5
1
Event Profile Manager
Parent Topic: Movies: Sci-Fi
Topic
Alien Related
Futuristic
Other
Sea
Space
Time Travel
1
3
2

FIG.25

Buffy	23/04/01 10.35pm	Yes
Charmed	23/04/01 9.31pm	Yes
Mysterious Ways	25/04/01 9.28pm	No
Star Trek	24/04/01 11.08pm	Yes
The Panel	24/04/01 9.30pm	No
X Files	25/01/01 8.31pm	Yes

FIG.26

Sport.Soccer.Goals	5	2 Programs
SciFi.Teleports	3	2 Programs
Boxing.Knockouts	1	1 Program

FIG.27

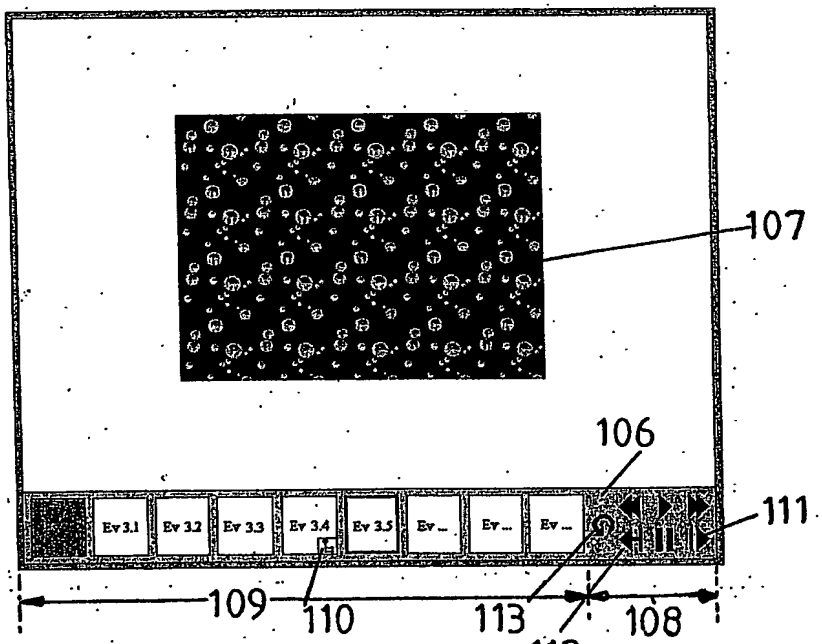


FIG.28

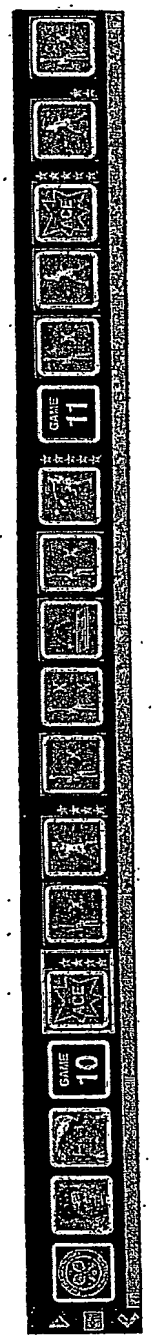


FIG.29

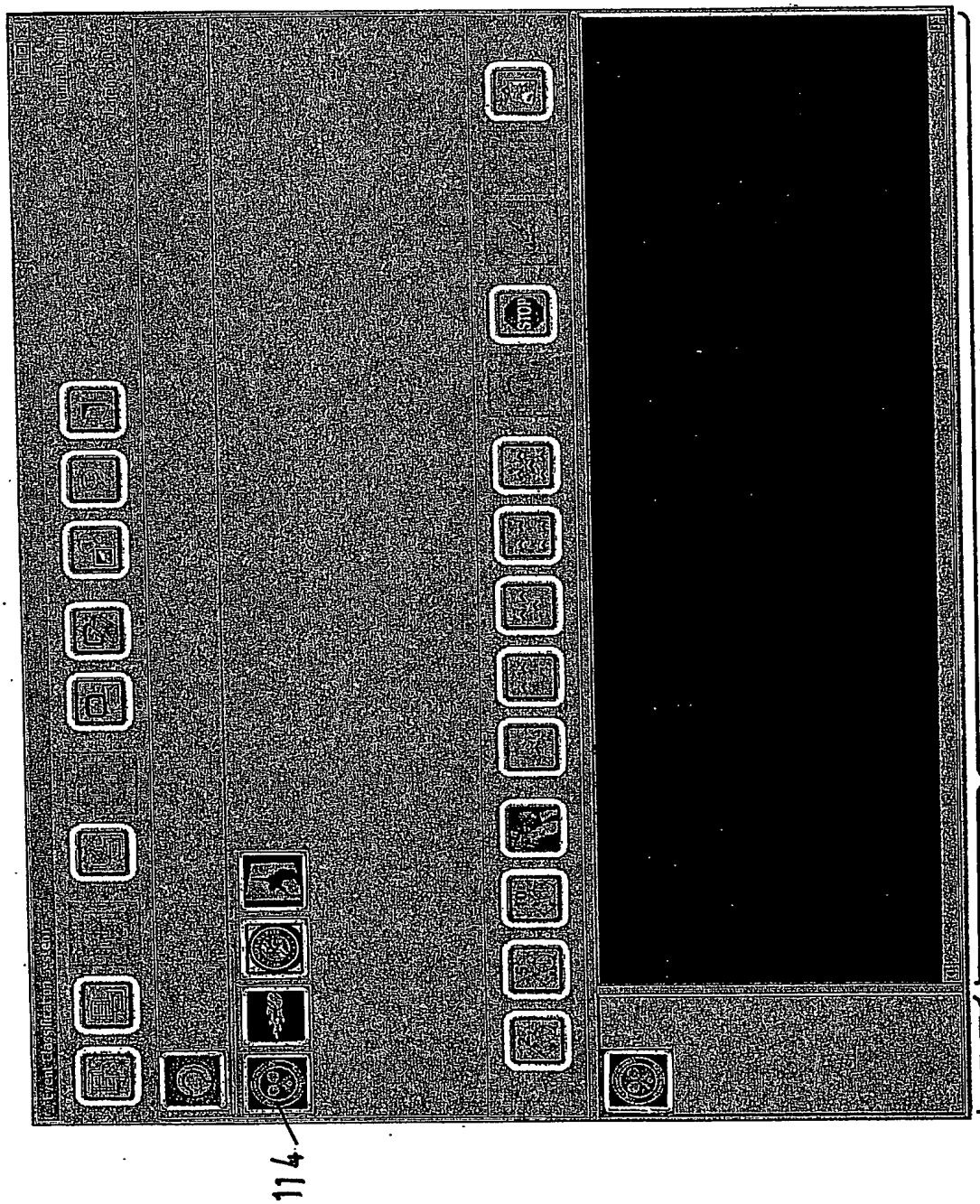


FIG. 30A

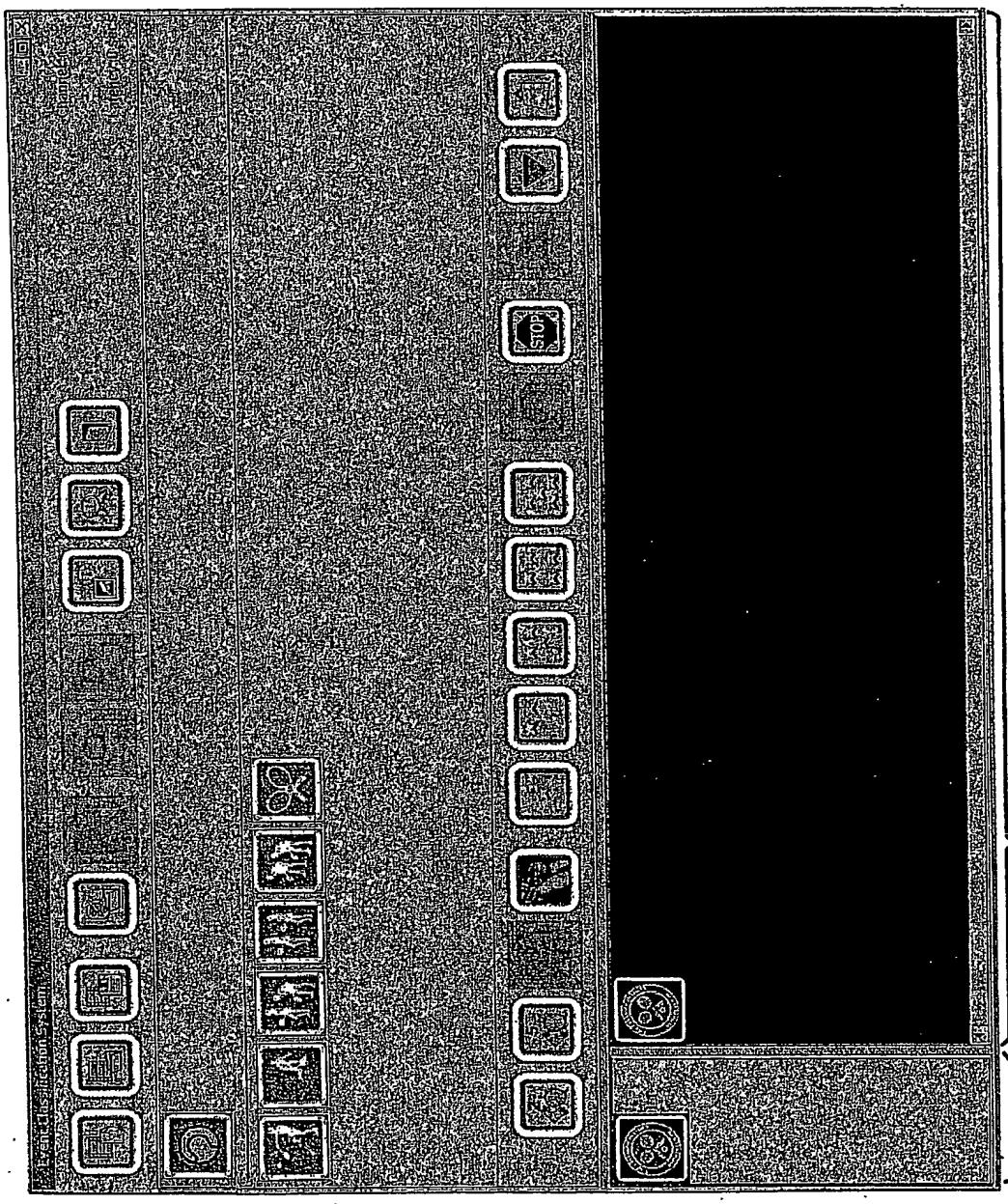


FIG.30B

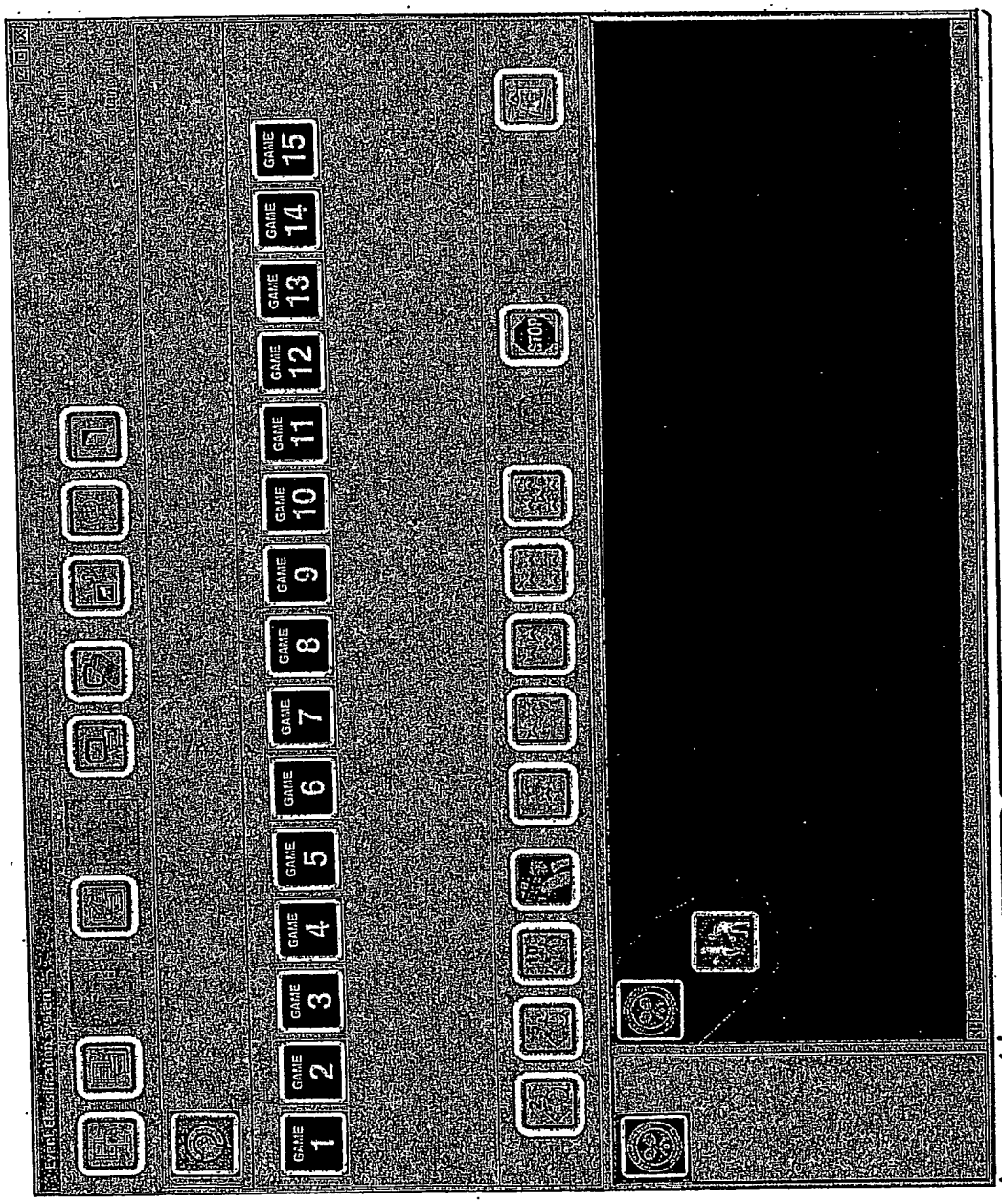

GAME 1
GAME 2
GAME 3
GAME 4
GAME 5
GAME 6
GAME 7
GAME 8
GAME 9
GAME 10
GAME 11
GAME 12
GAME 13
GAME 14
GAME 15
STOP
33
34

FIG.30C

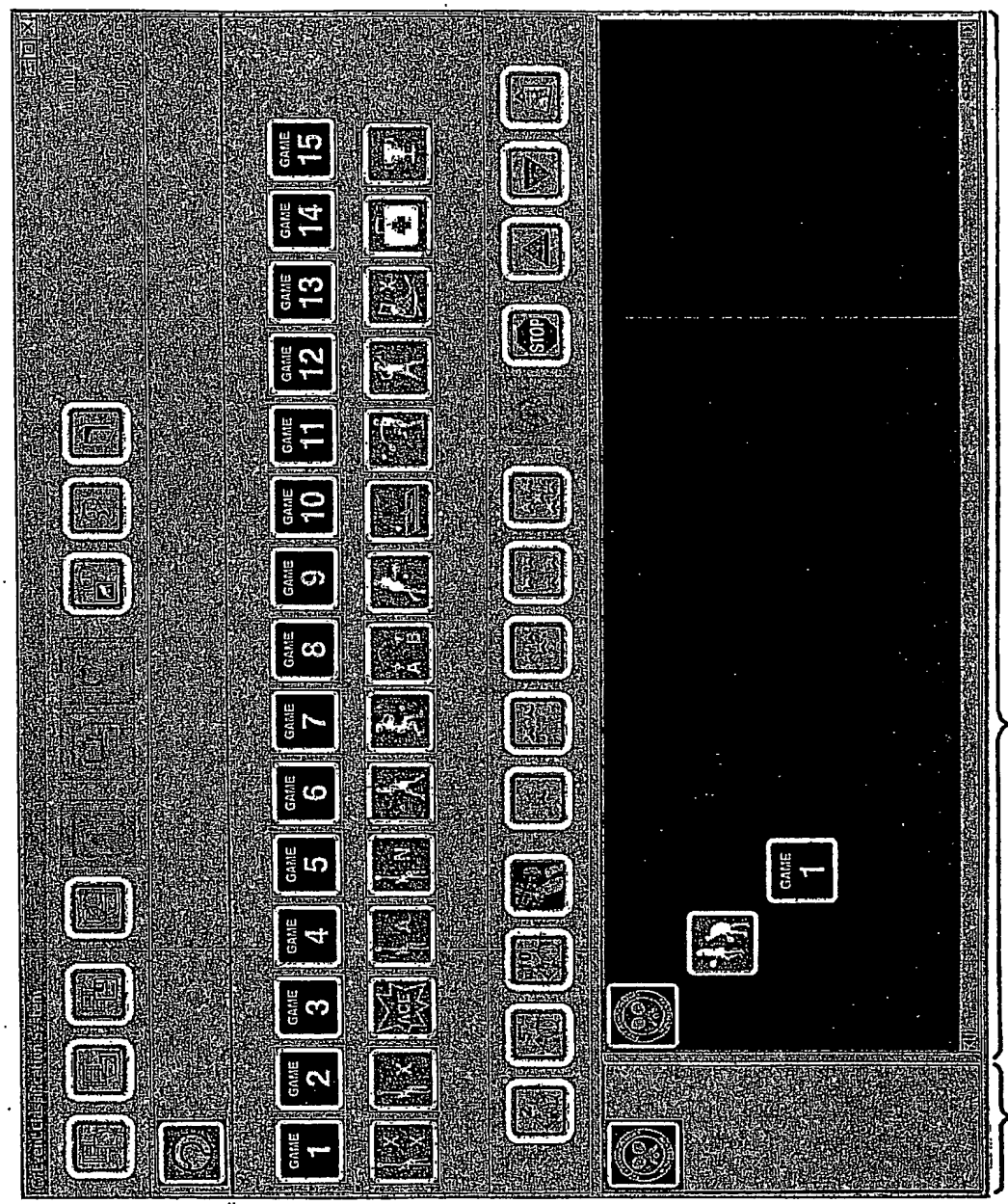

GAME 1
GAME 2
GAME 3
GAME 4
GAME 5
GAME 6
GAME 7
GAME 8
GAME 9
GAME 10
GAME 11
GAME 12
GAME 13
GAME 14
GAME 15
STOP
GAME 1
33
34

FIG.30D

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